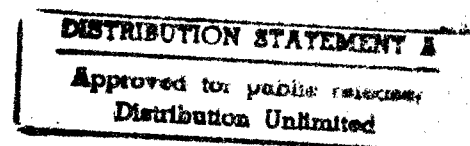


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21 December 1984

Near East/South Asia Report



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21 December 1984

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REGIONAL AFFAIRS

UN AMBASSADORS INTERVIEWED ON ACTIVITIES, ARAB ISSUES

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 79, 13 Oct 84 pp 51-53

[Interviews with the UN Ambassadors of Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the People's Democratic Republic of Yemen by Khalil Matar, "They Agree Inside the UN and Disagree Outside It," in New York, date not specified]

[Text] With the beginning of the work of the 39th session of the UN General Assembly, AL-TADAMUN concludes its series of interviews with Arab representatives, which we have been publishing consecutively, with three interviews with the following personalities: Ambassador Samir al-Shihabi, the representative of Saudi Arabia; Ambassador Muhammad Abu al-Hasan, the delegate of Kuwait; and the dean of the Arab diplomatic corps in the United Nations, Dr 'Abdullah al-Ashtal, the representative of the Democratic Yemeni Republic.

Therefore, AL-TADAMUN will have presented a detailed picture of the international organization at the present time, and the goals to which it aspires, through open dialogue with Arab diplomats who are contemporaries with the work of the UN, especially pertaining to the Arab issues and the international organizations role in dealing with them and finding radical solutions for them.

The Saudi Ambassador

The discussion with Saudi Ambassador Samir al-Shihabi began with his remark that "the UN is the international arena in the truest and fullest sense of the word, no matter how the view of it has varied through the years. Of course, there is an objective view and there is the official view, but no matter how the view of the UN has differed, its role on the world political scene is a big one. The Arabs, as well as other peoples, have major, serious problems and issues that affect peace, that affect stability, and that affect the fundamental interests. Despite the dashing of our hopes over many positions in which problems have been mishandled in the UN, due to the pressures that are exercised against the Arabs in certain circles, the international arena in the UN is an important field, and it would be a mistake to ignore its role and importance."

The ambassador continued: "With regard to the international conference over the Middle East, I think that one should not say that everything is at an impasse, forever. Matters are difficult now, by the nature of the case, due

to the rejection by Israel and the United States of the idea of the plan adopted by the General Assembly. However, I do not believe that the way is blocked permanently against this idea. The international community must take the initiative again in this direction.

"As for the Arab group in the UN, I think that it is working in coordination to a high degree of efficiency with, of course, some differences in points of view. However, generally, the coordination is excellent in the UN.

"Moreover, as developing nations, we have benefited from nonpolitical UN programs and organizations, which cannot be ignored, since the Arab community is a developing community. It is in need of everything. Whatever the UN offers, undoubtedly there is room for it in the Arab World. In its programs, the UN is nonpolitical, i.e., technical, economic, scientific and humanitarian. These may be wider in scope than the political activities."

The ambassador later explains: "As for Saudi Arabia, I can emphasize that the kingdom gives the UN perhaps more than what the UN gives the kingdom in non-political fields. Through the UN, the kingdom gives support for the Arab role and the Islamic role on the world scene. It gives on the basis of returning this assistance to the UN with interest for the developing nations in general, and the Arab and Islamic World in particular."

[Question] Will the current session of the UN result in anything new?

[Answer] I do not expect anything out of the ordinary. I think that the current session will be an active one. Note that the nations of the world come to the UN knowing that there is a limitation on the possibility of reaching immediate results through the United Nations.

The Kuwaiti Ambassador

Ambassador Muhammad Abu al-Hasan, the representative of Kuwait, dealt with the points raised by the Saudi Ambassador, as follows:

"The UN is like a mirror that reflects the international situation in all its negative and positive aspects, its symmetry and contradictions, its conflicts and coexistences. It is like a free, intellectual pulpit, which openly welcomes viewpoints, instead of changing that thought into a bullet in the circle of violence.

"Moreover, the United Nations has made clear the importance of increasing its effectiveness through increasing belief in its role. Its importance is reflected in the best of its images, in nonpolitical humanitarian cases.

"There is no doubt that the UN's importance and effectiveness is represented in the international family's benefiting from its economic, technical and developmental programs. They are many and have diverse importance.

"Kuwait is one of the nations that believes in the UN's importance and its programs. Therefore, it funds it, supports it and strives to see that there is a full benefit from it for all Arab nations that have need of it.

"Kuwait also benefits from some of the higher technical programs, through the sending of experts, and it benefits from specialized training programs in general. The Arab benefit is clear and is increasing from those diverse programs."

The Kuwaiti delegate added: "With respect to the UN's political form, there is the international conference that Secretary General Perez De Cuellar has called for, with the requirement that all parties to the dispute participate. Without this participation, the conference could not have the desired result."

"We in Kuwait feel that the rejection by the United States, and some other nations, of this conference should be considered a principal obstacle that must not be ignored. The alternative lies in convincing the rejectionist states of the importance of this conference and of the sincerity of the participants' intentions to solve this problem. Undoubtedly, any agreement between the two super powers would have a decisive influence on activating the idea of the conference."

"Moreover, the agreement of the Arabs in their concept of the importance of the conference, and the agreement of the Palestinians in their understanding of its role, will be among the positive factors to change the opinions of those reluctant states."

The Kuwaiti ambassador concluded by saying: "Accordingly, we think that the mutual Arab effort in the UN can be described as continuous and comprehensive. The coordination is present, and its influence varies. Its results vary with the disparity of the subjects placed on the agenda. All of this should be considered a healthy phenomenon, in which all the Arab delegations believe and strive to intensify."

The dean of the Arab diplomatic corps in the United Nations, Dr 'Abdullah al-Ashtal, agrees with the comments of the Saudi and Kuwaiti delegates, but he believes that the current session of the General Assembly might be one of the forgettable sessions in UN history, and one of the sessions that will not have any effective impact on political and international action. "It will produce no solutions or initiatives worth mentioning, because the 39th session is being held in the midst of a hostile, tense atmosphere. Tension on the international scene reached its heights after World War II. It has become generally accepted now that we are living in a stage of cold war, or that we are living in a stage of cold peace, which might change into cold war. Relations between the Soviet Union and the United States are not only cold, but rather, are hostile in some aspects. All of the areas of cooperation that the policy of detente bore in the 70's have been wiped out during the term of President Reagan. His administration, which has come to represent the confrontation between the two super powers, is the general impression, not only on the armament level but also on the level of the regional conflicts, whether in the Middle East, Africa, Central America or on the high seas. As a result of this international situation, and because of the American elections that will take place in the middle of the coming session, it is not expected that any initiative will come forth in any of the matters inscribed upon the General Assembly agenda."

"This is the general situation. Regarding the Arab issues, the situation is even gloomier and blacker, because we find the negative influence of the poor

and deteriorating international relations on the Arab issues and the Arab situation in general, and will reflect itself in a very negative way on the work of this session.

"Up to this moment, for the past 2 years, Arab organizations have been unable not only to resolve the existing problems, but the Arab leaders have even been unable to meet in a summit conference for 2 years or more. This situation is rare in the history of Arab relations and in the history of the Palestinian case. One should add to that, in the nature of things, the situation of fragmentation and confrontation among the Arab nations, and the loss of even a minimum of coordination. Then there is the preoccupation of the Arab states with the problem of the Gulf War on the one hand, the problem of Arab conflicts in the Middle East on the other hand, the problem of Lebanon and the Israeli occupation, as well as the problems of the Arab Maghreb. All of these problems, if we take them all together, will equal a suffocating Arab crisis that will have their own repercussions on the current session. That means that we absolutely do not expect anything to come out of this session, in terms of resolutions or new ideas, resulting in any progress or diplomatic gain for the Arab issues, particularly the Palestinian or Middle East cases. All we can expect from this session is a repetition of the resolutions of previous sessions. They will not be outside of this framework. Perhaps the most important event in this session will merely be the coming of the foreign ministers to the UN and their meeting amongst themselves, along the lines of the meeting between the Soviet minister and the American president.

"There is an important question that will also be discussed during this session, pertaining to an Arab issue, and that pertains to the suspension or denial of Israel's credentials. It has now become clear that Iran will introduce, as it did last year and the preceding year, a proposal to suspend Israel's membership. This proposal will not reach a vote, because as happened last year, it will be killed by a procedural vote. The Arabs found themselves confronting a new political reality, and they had to cooperate with the Iranian initiative. As happened last year, the Arab delegations coordinated to vote for the Iranian proposal, because the main idea to suspend Israel's credentials was an Arab idea, which was at the initiative of Iraq."

[Question] How do you view the UN's effectiveness and its role in influencing world events?

[Answer] The UN's effectiveness is derived from the effectiveness of the members themselves, and the atmosphere that prevades the UN conferences and meetings is the international atmosphere itself, which governs the UN members. One cannot talk about the UN in isolation from its members.

The principal, decisive resolutions, whether recommendations in the General Assembly or resolutions in the Security Council, are ultimately reflections of the will of the member states, and then reflections of the will of the international climate. As regards the Arab cause, I do not believe that the UN has been inadequate in its support for the Arab issues. Suffice it to say that there are more than 500 resolutions on behalf of the Arabs. However, these resolutions have no meaning, unless the Arabs can translate them into political reality. The distinguishing feature of the United Nations is that

it bestows international legitimacy, it gives political legitimacy to any one of the parties. However, by virtue of the composition of the Security Council, it cannot transform this legality into political reality. The best example of that is what happened between Britain and Argentina over the Falkland Islands. All Britain asked for from the Security Council or the UN was a very simple resolution, affirming that Argentina's military intervention in the Falkland Islands was illegal and affirming Britain's rights in those islands. It was just one document, one resolution. After that, the British fleet moved, transforming this resolution into political reality. That resolution was very important, because it was tantamount to a legal umbrella that gave the military initiative the strength to withstand any international protest.

As regards the Arab-Israeli conflict, Israel through its ally the United States has been able to find weak spots in the Arab ranks. Through the Camp David accords, it was able to finally draw Egypt out of the confrontation and conflict process. It was also able to create a focus for the disputes in the Gulf. The Iran-Iraq war, which has resulted in diverting the Arab thrust and resources to a side war, was not in reality the Arabs' war. That has been reflected on the Arab situation in general. With the support of the United States, Israel was also able to invade Lebanon and occupy its southern area, and it remains there to this minute. Despite that, there is no reaction.

The upshot in fact is that the United Nations cannot give us more than we are able to do for it. Legality has been available. It remains for the Arabs to take the action. There is no use in our blaming the UN; the blame must be directed at the Arabs themselves.

The Lebanese initiative in the Security Council could have been more effective and stronger, but it was clear from the start that the intention was not directed at mobilizing everything that could be mobilized politically and diplomatically against the Israeli occupation and the Israeli practices in South Lebanon. It was certainly possible to convene a meeting of the Coordinating Council of the nonaligned states and get a resolution from that meeting. It was possible to hold a meeting of the Islamic Conference or the ambassadors in the Islamic Conference and to obtain a resolution in that regard. It would have been possible in those two meetings to urge the nonaligned states, in addition to the Arab nations, to participate effectively in support of Lebanon. Suffice it to say that all the Arab nations did not participate in the discussions pertaining to South Lebanon. Nevertheless, in the end result it was clear that no matter what the Arab efforts to support the Lebanese position, the US position from the beginning was clear. It used the right to veto to shoot down a draft resolution, when it did not agree with most of its elements, because America has become a hostage to the Israeli policy, especially in this election year. In fact, the important point is not whether the matter was submitted in the Arab context, or whether it was submitted to the Security Council, so much as it is to continue the pressure on the United States and Israel. Such pressure as this can only come from nations that have broad economic relations with the United States.

[Question] What about the idea of the international conference?

[Answer] The fact is that the idea of an international conference is not a new idea. On the contrary, it started in the 70's, in that it is similar to the international conference or the sixth meeting, under the auspices of the Soviet Union and the United States. The idea of the international conference was also one of the results of the International Conference for Solidarity with the Palestinian People. That conference was held in Geneva. However, we now see a new initiative by the Soviet Union to hold an international conference within the framework of the Security Council as a way of finding a solution to the Palestinian issue.

Despite the fact that this idea is probably not destined for success, I expect with the beginning of the year that it will be one of the ideas to be submitted in earnest, because a way out of the Middle East issue can only be found within the context of action within this principle. It is well known that the ideas mentioned in the Soviet initiative are ideas that were themselves discussed in more than one Arab conference and basically can be summarized as finding a just and permanent solution in the Middle East, which would lead to the withdrawal of Israeli forces from all Arab lands occupied in 1967, and to give the Palestinian people the right of self-determination, including the establishment of an independent state, and to guarantee security and peace in this region. This type of conference, by its very nature, cannot succeed except in the context of international accord. However, as I said at the outset, the present international situation cannot lead to the creation of a climate that would make this idea an actual reality.

[Question] What is the level of coordination among the Arab group within the UN?

[Answer] The Arab group is a reflection of the mirror of the Arab Nation. Each permanent representative has instructions that reflect his nation's policy. However, this Arab group here is different from any council of Arab ambassadors in any other capital, because in any other capital there are bilateral relations between each ambassador and the country to which he is accredited. There is a special bilateral agreement. However, we here do not have bilateral issues. All of us have mutual issues, pan-Arab issues, particularly the Palestinian case and the Middle East issue in general. There must be coordination, because the concern of the permanent delegates is a pan-Arab concern first and international second. We find ourselves constantly in need of meetings and required to discuss the issues and make decisions concerning them.

[Question] What do you think of the possibility of Egypt's return to the Arab fold?

[Answer] There is no doubt that Egypt's removal from the Arab-Israeli confrontation was a great loss for the Arabs. Egypt's return to adherence to the Arab position would be considered a success for the Arab strategy. However, Egypt's return is shackled by the Camp David accords and the Egyptian-Israeli pact. Egypt's adherence to a position of coexistence, which might be at the expense of Palestinian and Arab rights, cannot result in a strengthening of the Arab position should it return. We would be proud to have Egypt participate in the unified Arab position, after it gets rid of any obligations stemming from the Camp David accords. The truth is that there is some Egyptian

criticism of Israeli positions but, on the other side, there is a kind of adherence to Egyptian-Israeli relations and to Egyptian-American relations, which are continually growing in a very big way. This makes Egypt's position merely a verbal move, which does not go beyond that. What is needed, if Egypt is to play a larger, leadership role within the Arab ranks, is for it to finally rid itself of the Camp David accords and all the alliances that have resulted from that.

[Question] What is your view of the UN's role in the nonpolitical programs?

[Answer] In addition to its attempts to maintain security and peace in the world, the most important UN activity is represented in the nonpolitical works, which are outside the scope of the Security Council and the General Assembly. I am talking here about the economic organizations. The development programs are programs that supervise the establishment of widescale assistance amounting to billions of dollars given to many of the developing nations. With regard to the developing nations, these programs have very big importance in some cases, because they mean a great deal when they pertain to projects required for general growth and prosperity. In addition to development programs, there is the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which are economic and financial institutions. There are technical agencies, such as the World Health Organization, UNICEF and the Civil Aviation Organization. There are more than 13 organizations that carry out very important work. The fact is that the Arabs, for some time, have noted the importance of these organizations and agencies and, accordingly, have established similar Arab agencies. However, they are subordinate to the Arab League and are equivalent to all those organizations and agencies subordinate to the UN. For example, there are specialized agencies for agriculture and education. What is needed is to activate these agencies. Unfortunately, as is the case in our Arab situation, the activities of these technical agencies depends to a great extent on the political climate. How one would like to see these organizations and agencies carry on their work without being directly influenced by the political atmosphere, which is constantly changing as is well known.

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CSO: 4404/56

MIXED MARRIAGES CONSIDERED THREAT TO GULF COUNTRIES

London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 24 Sep 84 p 20

[Article: "Mixed Marriages Threaten Gulf Nations"]

[Text] The Arab Gulf nations are feeling anxiety over the increase in the number of marriages between their citizens and foreign women. The nations believe that these marriages could threaten local traditions and diminish the number of original citizens.

Regarding the United Arab Emirates (UAE), a study conducted recently by the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs warned that marriages with foreign women should be considered a threat to the community, and it urged the government to impose fines on men who marry foreign women.

Some of the Arab Gulf states are heading toward banning mixed marriages. A portion of the blame for that is placed on the high cost of living and the dowry system.

In the UAE, where individual income is at the highest level in the world, the dowry can amount to 250,000 dirhams (\$68,000) and the cost of the bridal ceremonies can go as high as \$500,000.

The study, which was conducted in the UAE, states that brides from outside of the Gulf states cost considerably less money, since the foreign women are looking for a life of comfort.

In Saudi Arabia, Shaykh 'Abd al-'Aziz Ibn Baz has established a special fund to assist Saudis in marrying Saudi women.

Among the conditions of eligibility for citizens to receive a grant is that the young man be about to marry for the first time, that he establishes his need for financial assistance and that he has a certificate from an Imam stating that he is a good muslim.

The fund has in fact distributed 74 million riyals (\$20 million) in grants that amount to 25,000 riyals (\$7,000) to each bridegroom.

Qatar is following a similar practice, since it offers loans and grants to young Qatari men who marry Qatari women, while the Sultanate of Oman has set

a maximum limit on the dowry of \$1,800. The UAE and Kuwait are also studying the idea of making grants to new bridegrooms.

Mixed marriages have not been prevalent in Bahrain to the same extent. It is an island, inhabited by original residents numbering some 250,000. Mrs Hiya Shumali, chief of planning and research in the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, told Reuters that "Bahrain is the smallest Gulf state in terms of wealth, and dowries do not represent a major problem. What the Bahrainis do is delay their wedding plans until they can afford its expenses."

Obtaining statistics for the percentage of marriages with foreign women is difficult. However in the UAE, where foreign workers represent 80 percent of the total population, which is 1.1 million people, 50 percent of the total registered marriages are with noncitizens.

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CSO: 4404/56

AGRICULTURE MINISTER'S PERFORMANCE DEFENDED

Cairo AKHBAR AL-YAWM in Arabic 27 Oct 84 p 5

[Editorial by 'Abd-al-'Ati Hamid: "Dr Yusuf Wali and Demolition Pickaxes"]

[Text] One of the few ministers to whose efforts, capability and energy all attest is Dr Yusuf Wali. He is a minister who has not turned the ministry into a source of boasting and bragging but who always offers the model in effort and innovation. His day is constant effort, his night is constant contemplation of his tomorrow and his tomorrow is devoted to constant thinking of Egypt's future. He is in love with Egypt's soil and he personally goes to work to set an example for the most junior employees in the ministry in which he works. He is the first to reach the ministry and the last to leave it. He even spends his vacations in the fields discussing with the farmers their problems on the spot, solving these problems for them, speaking to them simply, just as they are, taking from them their experience and giving them his experience and solving the complex redtape problems, whether in the agricultural cooperatives or elsewhere.

He also meets constantly with the experts, telling them that he hopes the day will come when Egypt will not import any of its agricultural food needs. In fact, he has enabled Egypt to achieve self-sufficiency in [broad] beans and he has put it on its way toward self-sufficiency in lentils. Egypt is now exporting strawberries to the outside world.

I say this because I have noticed in recent days that Dr Yusuf Wali is the target of some tendentious pens trying to provoke the man and seeking their information from some biased and vengeful sources. These pens have been doing this for no purpose other than to make him feel that he is ploughing the sea, that he should save his efforts, that he who works is exposed to blows with bricks, and to divert his attention from his work to answering the press, the circles responsible for what the press has written and to answer the telephone calls inquiring about the reason for what is written in the press and for the attacks on the minister!

Regrettably, instead of encouraging the sincere workers, we hit them with bricks so that they may become preoccupied with defending themselves and dressing their wounds. Instead of having the production enhanced, we find the battles multiplying, the rancors growing and the wounds reopening.

Why don't we encourage those who work? Why don't we defend those who produce? It is time that we all rid ourselves of malice and hatred. Egypt is beautiful with its soil and its sons. It is time for us to rid ourselves of "those who belittle and make jokes" and who try to prevent this country from advancing, even though it is their country, because they always wish to see this country subservient, submissive and powerless and extending its hand [for alms] to the worthy and the unworthy. This will never happen. Egypt is prosperous with its sincere and loyal sons. In a phase when we are elevating the edifice, those who carry the pickaxes of demolition in their hands wish to destroy everything successful and beautiful. In the coming phase, Egypt must wipe out the bats and the owls [an ill omen in the Arab world] who love to live in ruins and debris. Tomorrow's future should be beautiful, advanced and free of hatred, of the pickaxes of demolition and of the rock-throwing gangsters.

8484

CSO: 4504/91

MINISTER OF INTERIOR'S NEW TAXI REGULATIONS DISCUSSED

London AL-AHRAM: AL-TAB'AH AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic 29 Oct 84 p 7

[Editorial by Salah Muntasir: "Taxi Problem"]

[Text] It is the easiest thing for the minister of interior to sign a decree calling for applying the taxi tariff in force and for using a meter in every taxicab, prohibiting any cab driver from picking up more than one passenger or group of passengers representing a single family and imposing various penalties on whoever violates the decree.

It is possible to implement this and it is possible for the minister to find the power with which to pursue the drivers violating the decree he has signed.

It is natural that the minister will also gain the approval of millions of passengers with this decree. But the question we must ask while tackling any problem with deep roots and with numerous intricate connections is: Till when?

Till when can the solution founded on force continue if this solution is in the interest of only one of the parties involved in the problem and not the interest of all the parties involved?

Isn't it one of the flaws of the solutions to our problems is that they often address the masses' spontaneous emotions, regardless of the soundness of these solutions in the long run?

This is why I have been happy to hear Maj Gen Ahmad Rushdi, the minister of interior, say that the taxi problem must be solved and will be actually solved in the near future and that to achieve a fair, sound and lasting solution, a large-scale study is currently underway and includes the three parties involved in the taxi problem, namely the taxi owners, the drivers and the passenger or the citizen.

The minister of interior said that without taking into consideration the interests of these parties in a balanced manner that does not permit the driver to plunder the owner and that does not permit either to exploit the passenger, no fair, sound and lasting solution can be achieved.

Practically, the study covers the costs of the operation, maintenance, repair and insurance of a taxi and other elements. After contacts with the Drivers Union, a decision will be made.

After the decision, there will be accountability and punishment and it will be the duty of all of us to defend and impose the decision with the power of the police and the people, all the people.

8494

CSO: 4505/79

GOVERNMENT REFORM ATTEMPTS SATIRIZED

Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic 8 Oct 84 p 8

[Article by Wahid Ghazi: "Hello, People"]

[Text] Boss Dakruri is the owner of the most famous bread bakery in the neighborhood. He took off his jalabiyah for the first time in his life to put on a full suit at the instructions of his new wife. Last Monday morning, he sat at his bakery's door, as usual, smoking his water pipe and thumbing through the morning paper. His attention was drawn to an item on page 8 of AL-AHRAM newspaper that said "an inspector in every bakery to supervise the improved loaf of bread." The boss thought that it was a cartoon caption so he looked up to see the cartoon, but it was not there! He was sure that the news item was true and not a joke.

The boss began reading the news item: "Minister of Supply Dr Naji Shatlah, during his tour yesterday in the company Maj Gen 'Abd-al-Qadir al-Tawanisi, director general of food control, decided to appoint a food inspector for every bakery producing improved-quality bread to ensure that established specifications are being met."

The boss re-read the news item, bursting out in laughter that prompted his boy to ask what was going on. He handed the boy a copy of AL-AHRAM which he read and burst out laughing himself.

The boss was dozing off when he saw from afar a man over 40 years old approaching him. He stood up to greet him. The man said: "I am the inspector responsible for supervision of the bakery."

The boss smiled and muttered "Are you the one mentioned in today's newspaper?"

The inspector said: "Exactly, you must have read the minister's decision in AL-AHRAM."

The boss said: "Indeed, I did." He called out to the boy to bring a chair and a cold drink for the inspector. The chair was brought out and the inspector sat down in silence, drinking his soda drink. Suddenly, he asked the boss: "Am I going to sit here like this?" The boss said: "What do you want us to do, dance?"

The inspector said: "No, I want to supervise."

[The boss said:] "Go ahead and supervise. The bakery is yours."

The inspector stood up, walked towards the bakery and went in. It was burning hot. He stood watching the dough being cut up, giving instructions. All of a sudden, he smelled the aroma of grilled meat. The aroma penetrated his nostrils. It occurred to him that he had not had breakfast yet. The boy placed a piece of iron in the oven and pulled out a large pan of meat which he took outside.

The inspector heard the boss call out: "Will you join us, inspector, in the name of God." The inspector went outside the bakery to find the pan in front of the boss, steaming and emitting the same aroma that had attacked the inspector's nose. Around the pan were a number of dishes with pickles and warm loaves of bread. The boss beckoned him to sit down. The inspector could not resist, so he muttered to him: "I am going to eat with you just so we can break bread together." The inspector and the boss finished off the whole pan. The boy removed the empty pan and dishes, replacing them with plates of cold watermelon and soda pop bottles.

Suddenly, the inspector found his wife and two children standing in front of him. He took them aside, saying: "What brings you here? How did you know where I am? This is no way to behave, Saniyah."

"So what, Mr Inspector. Are you ashamed of me or what? The children were expelled from school. They wanted them to wear the school uniform and to carry their books in a book bag, plus they wanted money for expenses. I went to see you at the ministry and was told that you had been assigned to Boss Dakruri's bakery, so I came here. What is wrong with that?

"Alright, you go now and let the children miss school and..."

The boss rose to his feet saying: "Ma'am, Mr Inspector, come into my office inside the bakery." He swaggered into the bakery, followed by the inspector and the inspector's wife and two children. They all sat in the boss' office adjoining the bakery. The boss turned on the air conditioner and called out to his boy: "Go bring lunch for the lady and the two young boys."

The inspector tried to stop him, but the boy had already gone. He returned with a pan full of meat which he placed atop the boss' desk on a piece of old newspaper. He surrounded it with plates of pickles and hot loaves of bread, the same meal the inspector had with the boss. Once again the inspector tried to object, but the two children did not give him a chance.

Their small hands were already into the pan, followed, at the urging of the boss, by the mother, who vowed divorce if she did not join her children. In came the plates of melon.

The mother and children finished eating. The mother looked at her husband, the inspector, saying: "What do you have to say about it, Mr Inspector?"

The boss laughed, putting his hand in his pocket to take out a wad of money which he handed to the wife. The inspector was flabbergasted by this surprise and stood in silence.

The wife shrieked, "What is this, boss?"

The boss said: "This is a reward for the inspector. The ministry sent it to him all the way here. Is he not working here now? Have you not seen the ministry's decision in the newspapers."

The wife looked at her husband, who was still silent. She reached for the money which she slipped into her handbag and went on her way.

Suddenly the boss awoke to the boy's nudges: "Wake up boss, the new inspector is here."

The boss said, yawning: "The inspector who was eating with me out of the pan, where did he go?"

The boy laughed: "You were the one who was eating rice and yoghurt with the angels. You needed to catch up on your sleep, so I let you rest."

"By the grace of God, you mean it was all a dream?"

"Of course, boss."

"The news in AL-AHRAM, was that a dream too?"

"No, boss. The news is real, not a dream. The inspector talked about in the newspapers is here."

"You mean the resident inspector. Because, God willing, I am going to live with you here at the bakery."

The boss and inspector burst out laughing. The boss looked at the boy: "Are the pans in the oven, boy?"

"Of course, boss. Shall I get lunch ready?"

The boss looked at the inspector. The inspector muttered: I accept for one reason only."

The boss said: "What is that?"

The inspector said: "So that we can break bread together!"

The boss muttered: "Hello, all ye people. By the Prophet's religion, you shall be fine and dandy. Long live the Ministry of Supply. Long live the decision of the resident inspector. God save the decision and the maker of the decision!"

12502

CSO: 4504/60

NPUG LEADER CRITICIZES GOVERNMENT ON KAFR AL-DAWWAR

Cairo AL-AHALI in Arabic 10 Oct 84 p 1

[Article by Khalid Muhyi-al-Din: "Beware Before It Is Too Late"]

[Text] The way in which the National [Democratic] Party Government handled the Kafr al-Dawwar incidents alarmed all the national forces that are concerned about the country's future and about paving the road to true democracy.

The government and its information agencies disregarded the true reasons for the sit-in staged by the Kafr al-Dawwar workers. Thus, the situation developed into demonstrations outside the factory zone and an ensuing clash with Central Security. These reasons may be traced primarily to higher flour, bread and other commodity prices which translate into a general price hike. At the same time, the new payroll deductions for the new social security law went into effect and the state's general budget was published, heralding additional price hikes and higher inflation rates due to the deficit and revealing a persistence in the policy of tax and tariff exemptions for the rich. All this occurred in the absence of valid channels for democratic expression through which workers can put forth their demands and press for their realization.

Instead of admitting its mistake and backing off from these policies, or at least putting off making a decision until after the subsidy debates the president proposed holding with the political parties, the government resorted to the rusty conventional method that led us in the seventies to an acute crisis: the search for a scapegoat which was, as usual, the "far left," according to the interior minister's public communique, or the "Grouping Party," according to the government press and to what a senior official said in the meeting of the National Party's parliamentary body.

If this means that the NPUG is against higher prices, those of bread, flour and all other basic needs of the industrious Egyptian people in particular; that it opposes certain articles of the new social security law; that it rejects those social and economic policies that give tax and tariff breaks to millionaires and allow parasites to plunder Egypt's wealth and smuggle billions of Egyptian pounds (in hard currency) out of the country; that it proclaims its views and alternate policies, calling on people to espouse them; and that it sends its members to stand side by side with their colleagues in the factories, the fields, the schools and all the other institutions to defend their

economic, social and democratic rights, this is a charge we do not deny. Ultimately, it represents the most basic truths of democratic party action. To abandon these facts is to abandon our right to exist, to forsake our principles and to contribute to undermining the limited sum of the currently-bestowed democratic rights. However, this is one thing, and the government agencies' accusation of the party and its leaders of violating the law, instigating sabotage and vandalism and distributing leaflet for incitement is something else which we reject and is refuted by reality.

It is curious that the government that claims that its party received 72.98 percent of the vote in the People's Assembly elections, while claiming that our party only got 4.17 percent (a rigged result, for sure), says that our party is the leader of every mass movement by the workers, the students and the professionals, an honor we covet but do not claim.

But, do the features of aggression against democracy stop at this dangerous phenomenon?

Practical experience in the past few weeks confirms the existence of other disturbing and disconcerting positions:

--The government is still determined to deprive the mass movement of the simplest means of democracy prescribed by the human rights charters and exercised by parties, unions and federations the world over, such as the right to independent organization, assembly, peaceful demonstration and strike. Not satisfied with that, it incriminated the mass movement for writing communiques and petitions, explaining its positions and for protesting laws that imperil its interests without any encroachment on production and the conduct of business.

--The only method the government knows for dealing with any peaceful mass movement is waving a "big stick." The State Security Investigations organs and the Central Security legions are the ones that effect, in the end, the outbreak of counter-violence and the reign of suppressive methods.

--The government is trying to impose a new blockade around the opposition parties movement. Not satisfied with its monopoly over the daily press, the radio and TV station, it also wants to impose a ban on the publication and distribution of party statements presenting its viewpoint so as to deprive us of the most fundamental rights.

This is something we can neither accept nor be reticent about.

Some sides believe that the party must be reticent about announcing its opinion on certain issues embarrassing to the government on the pretext of stability and avoiding incitement! These phenomena, as we have already said, are very alarming and it is our right, rather, our duty, to caution against them before it is too late.

12502

CSO: 4504/60

CHIEF OF STAFF REVIEWS ARMED FORCES' DEVELOPMENT

Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic No 2606, 3 Oct 84 pp 10-11

[Interview with Lt Gen Ibrahim al-'Urabi, chief of staff, by Suhayr al-Husayni] "Peace Does Not Mean Relaxation; What Happened in Red Sea Is Threat to Egyptian National Security";" date and place not specified]

[Text] What is the meaning of the "October spirit" and where do we stand vis-a-vis this spirit now?

What are the capabilities of the Egyptian fighter who scored the victory in the October war, who penetrated the wall of fear and of the impossible and crossed over the barrier of defeat?

What is the role of the Egyptian armed forces in peace? Does this role call for relaxation and for reducing the size and budget of the armed forces or are there serious pitfalls that demand constant caution and alertness and development of the strike and deterrent force?

AKHIR SA'AH conducted this frank interview with Lt Gen Ibrahim al-'Urabi, the chief of staff, 11 years after the military miracle and addressed these and other questions to one of the commanders who took part in achieving the glorious feat. At the same time, Lt Gen Ibrahim al-'Urabi explains the true nature of what has happened in the Red Sea and its connection with Egyptian national security.

[Question] To start the interview with Lt Gen Ibrahim al-'Urabi, the armed forces chief of staff, we begin with this question:

On the basis of your participation as one of the men and commanders of the October war, what do you tell the youth who were not present at the war or who were present but did not understand its events by virtue of their young age?

[Answer] Before I start talking about the 11th anniversary of the October victory, the truth is that I would like to begin with a word to my sons, the men of the armed forces, on this occasion, namely that with our celebration of the great October victory, we should not stop at the outward

appearances of celebration and of holding military parades. Rather, every officer and soldier must ask himself:

Where were we on the morrow of the war and where are we now and where have we been for the past year? What have we done and accomplished during this year? Are we still standing in the same spot or have we made progress with our performance? Have we been content with doing the work or have we developed it?

To put it briefly, what has every one of us offered the armed forces and Egypt throughout a year? We in the armed forces are not employees required to sign the attendance books or to do some paper work which can be delayed from day to day. No, we deal with Egypt's security and the performance should be at the level of grave responsibility.

(The chief of staff added:) I, in my position, also ask myself the same question: What is the position of the armed forces in comparison with a year ago? What is their position now and what is it that we have hoped to achieve and how can we achieve it?

This is what we call a pause with one's self. This, in my view, is the real celebration of the October victory anniversary. If we wish to apply this concept scientifically, then we should examine the armed forces through their main elements, namely:

Man at his various levels.

The equipment or weapons.

The combat spirit which binds the man to the equipment or weapon.

Between Fighter of 1973 and Fighter of 1984

[Question] What can we say if we compare the elements of the armed forces, as you have just defined them, in 1973 and 1984. Let us begin with the fighter in the 1973 October war and the fighter of 1984. What are the aspects of similarity and difference?

[Answer] Insofar as the fighter is concerned, there is no doubt that there is a big scientific difference between the fighter who waged the October war and the current fighter. The military sciences have developed by a large degree and our concept of absorbing the military sciences has also developed. Our opening up scientifically to the various countries of the world has also helped in this regard.

(The chief of staff added:) This is why I always say in my meetings with the officers, especially the middle level officers with the rank of lieutenant colonel and major, that their lot is better than ours, we the generations of the 1950's and 1960's, insofar as education is concerned because military science was not so advanced in our time and because most of this science was then built on personal experiences. But now the

opportunity to get an education is open for whoever seeks it from the time of enrollment in a military academy until the time of retirement. For every age and rank, there are varied sciences befitting it, beginning with the B.A. degree and ending with the post-doctorate studies.

In this regard, it can be said that we have been able in the past few years to open up more extensively to the world's military institutes. We now have military scholarships in 13 countries and these scholarships range in level from specialization courses to doctorate and post-doctorate studies. As for the level of education within the republic, we have made strides on the path of officer education and not a long time will pass when all the armed forces officers will have earned a B.S. degree in the various branches of engineering or a B.A. degree in business management.

Absorbing Modern Weapons

(Lt Gen Ibrahim al-'Urabi also said:) Thus, we can say that we have focused during the year on developing the scientific capabilities of the armed forces' fighters, and not only among the officers' ranks because we also send noncommissioned officers on scholarships, each according to his level. This has required strengthening the base of language education, especially the teaching of English, in the armed forces.

As for the specialists in the various branches of science, we have been careful in the armed forces to develop a treasure of specialists in the various spheres. We are now proud of the specialized technical capabilities included in the armed forces. As for the soldiers, there is no doubt that one of the advantages the armed forces enjoyed upon entering the October war was the presence of a full generation of extended service soldiers who turned with the passage of time into veteran soldiers.

As for the 1984 soldier, he can, qualitatively, absorb the complex modern weapons. The state has helped us. This is why we find that most of the recruits are now people with university and middle-level qualifications. At present, we do not accept in the armed forces uneducated people, except for craftsmen and skilled people who join the army as professionals, such as drivers, machinists and carpenters. The armed forces eradicate the illiteracy of such recruits during their service in the army.

As for fighters operating missiles, radars, artillery or tanks, they are either volunteers with a high level of capability or recruits with, at least, a middle-level education. We have expanded the efforts to educate a broad segment of noncommissioned officers abroad, especially the technicians among them.

[Question] The 1973 fighter enjoyed a high combat capability about which the entire world talked. This capability was gained as a result of the experience gained by this fighter through his participation in the 1967 operations and the subsequent operations. What about the current fighter and how does he gain this combat experience in the state of peace in which we live now?

[Answer] This experience can be gained in time of peace through training. This is why we say that the training must be realistic. Realism means that the training be conducted under conditions as close as possible to battle conditions, using live munitions as much as possible and making sure that a part of the training is conducted under difficult climatic conditions or at night and choosing the training sites in rugged terrain similar to the terrain of the expected operations theater.

Diversity of Weapon Sources

[Question] Regarding the second element, namely weapons and equipment, it is well known that Egypt consumed vast quantities of weapons during the 1973 October war. Have the armed forces been able to make up for these weapons and what is the difference in the quality of the weapons presently available to our armed forces and the weapons with which Egypt fought the October battle?

[Answer] If we move to talk about the second element in building armed forces, namely weapons and equipment, we find that comprehensive development has taken place and that this development intensifies annually. By expanding the base of diversification of the weapon sources, which we have adopted for years, our armed forces are now acquiring their needs for sophisticated weapons and equipment which were not available in the October war. The comparison is not in numbers but in quality.

For example, if my calculations contain one specific weapon--exactly one weapon--and then I get a more sophisticated weapon, I count it as one and a half weapon. What I mean is that if we have not been able to recoup the same numbers, then we make up for quantity with quality. One of the factors we take into consideration in developing our military capability is the degree of growth in the surrounding military capabilities.

What we mean is that if the military capabilities surrounding us grow, then we must enhance our own capabilities so that we may not be overtaken by time, not to mention the need to take Egypt's commitments in the area into consideration.

No Risking Egypt's Security

[Question] There remains the third element, namely the combat spirit which is the bond tying the soldier to the weapon and which governs the level of management of the battlefield. Let us compare the combat spirit in October 1973 and at present.

[Answer] The combat spirit begins with the individual fighter's morale, meaning that if we fail to provide the individual fighter with the most convenient conditions for his performance of his tasks, then we cannot expect 100 percent results from him. Half solutions cannot be accepted where the fighters' performance is concerned because the risk here is a risk involving the safety and security of all of Egypt and a risk taken by exposing its citizens' lives to danger. The loss here is an enormous

one and is an unacceptable one. Therefore, all efforts must be exerted to reduce or to completely avert such a loss. There is no doubt that the armed forces have offered their members a lot to insure that they devote their efforts to their work. I believe that what has taken place in the past 3 years in the armed forces to insure an honorable life to their members exceeds what had been done in a large number of previous years.

(The chief of staff added:) We want the fighter to devote his efforts to giving to the armed forces. We give him and he must give us. The giving is mutual. Moreover, when we solve the problems of the armed forces' members, we are ultimately solving a part of the people's problems because the armed forces are a part of the people. When we solve a fighters' housing or medical problem or some other problem, we are solving the problem of an Egyptian citizen.

Peace Does Not Mean Relaxation

[Question] Egypt is now living in a state of peace. What, in your opinion, is the armed forces' role in this phase?

[Answer] The answer to this question is that the armed forces are working with the objective of being prepared for war at any time. Peace is an opportunity to expand training and to develop armament, even if there is talk of peace. An era of peace does not mean a freeze or relaxation. Yes, there is peace and we are committed to it because this commitment is political. But the armed forces must be prepared for war at any time. Peace is a political decision and war is a political decision also. But ultimately, the armed forces are responsible for defense and war.

[Question] There are opinions to the effect that the peace period under which we are living dictates a reduction in the armed forces' numbers and in the budget allocated for the armed forces. What is your comment on this?

[Answer] Very frankly, does peace mean reducing the armed forces or their budget? Here, I say there is no peace that is not protected by strength. There is no peace without strength.

Second, we are streamlining expenditures. Yes, this has been happening in the armed forces for 3 years. Streamlining is not reduction. Streamlining means the best use of the available capabilities and resources, the avoidance of extravagance and adoption of the systems and means that do not saddle the budget with burdens.

But to say in an absolute manner reduction of the armed forces or of the budget, those who make such statements must study Egypt's security and the threats made against this security, be they apparent or concealed.

There is another important factor. If we compare the rate of military spending in Egypt with the national income, we find that it is smaller than that of numerous other countries with circumstances similar to ours.

Military spending in Egypt is not consumption spending altogether. A part of this spending goes indirectly to the benefit of the state, such as building roads, airports, ports, hospitals and educational institutes that train and graduate annually thousands of people who ultimately flow into the vessel of the state's manpower. It is true that an allout war does not erupt overnight, but threats to the national security do emerge from time to time.

What Is in the Red Sea?

[Question] The latest of these threats are perhaps the explosions that have occurred in the Red Sea. What is your excellency's interpretation of what has happened and how do we protect our regional waters in the future?

[Answer] What has happened in the Red Sea is a threat to Egyptian national security. This is a new kind of conflict whereby we depart from allout operations and allout war to small and partial operations that may escalate in one form or another and in a planned or an unplanned manner, with us finding ourselves in a short time facing a comprehensive and direct threat.

Regarding the issue of securing our territorial waters, these waters extend along a 2,000-kilometer stretch and we know how to protect them fully. I also say that what has happened in the Red Sea is not a military action which I am able to confront directly. It is an action that can be perpetrated by any vessel.

[Question] What is your opinion of what is being said about the exaggeration being made on the Red Sea issue as a result of faulty information and faulty assessments on the part of some people?

[Answer] The armed forces have not issued faulty information at any time. However, some judgments were made before any information was issued.

Development of New Weapon

[Question] What was the new weapon which Egypt used in the October war and which caught Israel by surprise and what is the weapon which the armed forces felt they had to acquire as one of the requirements of modern war?

[Answer] The real weapon Egypt used in the October 1973 war was the Egyptian man's will, his will in the war decision and his resolution to implement it. As for the new weapon wanted, any military man with big hopes and aspirations asks this question. Weapons are nowadays developed and renewed with indescribable rapidity. What is important is that we get the weapons we actually need.

[Question] So far, Egypt has not written the October war history in the manner compatible with the greatness of the accomplishment. More books and publications have been issued in various countries than in Egypt. Has not the armed forces command given thought to embarking on such an endeavor by virtue of its importance to the future generations?

[Answer] The armed forces have their documents and they have written on and analyzed the October war events.

[Question] Perhaps at the military level. But no books have been published for the ordinary Egyptian citizen.

[Answer] Insofar as we are concerned, the issue pertains to the purely military aspect. After the war, we analyzed the events and the lessons learned and issued instructions for the application of specific methods. All the activity after the October events has taken place in light of the outcome of the October war and of our awareness of the mistakes, benefits and lessons learned. It is on the basis of this that we proceed in the armed forces.

But the armed forces' analysis of the events and of the war is certainly not fit to be published to the citizens. I believe that it is better for others to write the [war] history for the civilian readers and to record this history so that they may cover all the political, economic and social aspects of the war.

Where Is October Spirit?

[Question] Once again, what do you tell the youth about the October war? We started the interview with this question but the conversation dictated to us other questions and this question has remained unanswered. Should I aspire to get an answer before conclusion of the interview?

[Answer] This answer is possibly tied to writing the history of the October war so that the youth may appreciate this war. They must first know our situation before the October war--the political, military and economic situation--in order that they may learn that the war decision was a courageous decision and that the armed forces' performance under the conditions prevailing then was a performance up to the level of the responsibility. This is what the youth will learn if they become aware of our position before the October war, with the war decision and then with the war events.

Our youth will learn that there is nothing impossible, that the lack of resources poses no obstacle if a man is determined and that any man will achieve his goal if he is determined and he employs his resources to achieve his goal. This is one of the lessons learned from the October war. Consequently, the meagerness of resources cannot be considered a pretext which we may use to stand still. This is the October spirit.

[Question] The phrase "the October spirit" has become popular and well known. What is meant by this phrase?

[Answer] The October spirit means that if we had paused and assessed the situation before the October war with computer calculations, the computer would have told us: Don't go to war. But there was the factor of will. This factor can change a lot of things. The commander's determination is also reflected in the fighter's morale. Add to all this completely sound

scientific planning and the will and resolution to achieve victory and faith in the victory. It was thus that the victory was achieved.

[Question] And what do you tell the youth about the October heroes who sacrificed their blood and lives to liberate their soil and homeland?

[Answer] I will not say [anything] but will note what is followed in the Soviet Union, for example. I recall that when we were on a visit to Stalingrad, we actually studied the military history of World War II in detail. But during the visit, they presented to us a "civilian" who had been a soldier who defended a house in Stalingrad. No delegation went to visit them without having this soldier telling it his story.

(The chief of staff added:) In France, any celebration at the Arc de Triomphe is attended by the veteran soldiers with their banners and their medals. Here, I say that the October war history contains important acts of heroism that can be a "model" for the youth if we organize student visits to these sites, as we used to do in the past, and if we get one of the armed forces' heroes to accompany the students and explain to them how we fought, where the enemy was, what position we were in and so forth. I believe that this role is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. It is also possible for a school to invite the parent of a student who is a soldier, an officer or a retired military man to tell the students the story of what happened in October. This is what we call direct enlightenment because not all our children have read [about the October war]. There is also the immediate human element. Meetings between our students and our soldiers who took part in the October war will have the greatest impact.

8484

CSO: 4504/71

AMBASSADOR TO JORDAN DISCUSSES RESUMPTION OF RELATIONS

Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic No 2609, 24 Oct 84 pp 10-11

[Interview with Ihab Wahbah, ambassador to Jordan, by Sana' al-Sa'id: "Egypt's Ambassador in Amman Recounts: How King Husayn Informed Me of Decision; There Was no Estrangement from Jordan"; date and place not specified]

[Text] Since King Husayn made his courageous decision to resume full diplomatic relations between Egypt and Jordan, the reactions assessing the decision, its dimensions, its significance and its results have not stopped. Some of the rejectionists have claimed that the step is some sort of an alliance and of an agreement between the two countries for a new axis between the two countries: The Arab and international majority has blessed the step, describing it as a positive step serving Arab solidarity and contributing to solving the Middle East problem generally and to the Palestinian issue in particular through a peaceful path that is in the interest of all the parties involved.

What has the decision contributed insofar as the Arab cause and the Middle East situation are concerned? To what degree can this step contribute to tackling the problems and obstacles standing in the face of peace? At the level of the two countries, what are the results and what are the forms of cooperation to which the Egyptian-Jordanian rapprochement has led?

In an interview with AKHIR SA'AH, Ihab Wahbah, the first Egyptian ambassador to Jordan since resumption of relations, has said that the courageous Jordanian decision is for the entrenchment of Arab influence, for restoration of Arab solidarity and for the purpose of having Egypt regain its traditional and natural place in its Arab nation. What is certain is that there are numerous other Arab steps that have reached the same conviction.

[Question] You have lived the period of transient estrangement between Egypt and Jordan. At the same time, you have lived with the reality of the resumption of full relations between the two countries. How did the Jordanian movement proceed until it reached the point of restoration of full diplomatic relations?

[Answer] To begin, what I would like to assert is that there was no estrangement between Egypt and Jordan for numerous reasons, especially the

fact that contacts between the two countries proceeded actively. Moreover, the presence of 190,000 Egyptian workers in Jordan is a sufficient indication of the volume of existing daily activity between the two countries. There are also the two peoples' ceaseless contacts in whose presence nobody can imagine any estrangement.

In fact, Jordan developed its relationship with Egypt considerably and tangibly throughout a long period prior to making the decision to resume the relations.

There was some sort of an understanding at the Fez summit that the Arab countries may develop their relations with Egypt in the manner each country deems fit. This is what Jordan has done toward Egypt. Jordan did not stand still but rather developed its relations with Egypt in all spheres. It suffices to remember the steps that preceded the decision. Last December, the trade protocol was actually signed after being frozen for a period and we then began to implement it. In the wake of this step, tourist delegations were exchanged and in a short time a meeting took place between President Mubarak and King Husayn, both in New Delhi and in the U.S. capital, in addition to letters exchanged by the two.

We must note that in May, Jordanian Prime Minister Ahmad 'Ubaydat stated that Jordan would develop its relations with Egypt for the good of the two countries and the good of the Arab nation. No more than 2 weeks before adoption of the decision, the Council of Ministers decided to form a committee at the level of undersecretaries of all the ministries concerned to lay down the foundations for developing economic relations between the two countries.

This is in addition to Jordan's praise throughout a long period for Egypt's positions, whether in the Gulf, in Lebanon or regarding the Palestinian issue. This was evident and the praise was made at the highest Jordanian levels.

[Question] But what is the philosophy behind the decision to start with?

[Answer] In my opinion, the philosophy behind the decision is simple. It was evident that there was no Arab effectiveness. To achieve this effectiveness, Arab solidarity had to be restored as a start. The question preoccupying the minds of all, especially of Jordan, was: How could there be talk of real and serious solidarity if Egypt remains outside the Arab arena? Normalcy had to be restored to the situation. This is, in fact, the philosophy behind the decision.

[Question] There are thoughts and impressions that Iraq may have inspired Jordan to take this step so that it may absorb the initial reactions that may follow this decision in the Arab arena?

[Answer] It is unimaginable that this is true because the decision is Jordanian and it emanates from Jordan's will and sovereignty. As I have already pointed out, there had been steps which preceded this decision.

May I also add that any Arab state may develop the conviction that solidarity must be restored and may subsequently realize that Egypt must regain its weight and take its natural traditional place. I believe that there are several states that have developed this conviction now and that they will follow Jordan's example and will not delay long in taking a step similar to the sound, courageous and wise Jordanian step.

[Question] How were you notified of the decision?

[Answer] Despite all the indications preparing for this step, announcement of the decision itself at this particular time was a surprise, considering that it was announced on the evening television newscast at 2000 Jordan time and 2100 Egypt time. I immediately contacted Cairo and informed it of the decision as it was broadcast.

Hardly a few minutes had passed when King Husayn called me on the telephone and informed me that he had contacted President Mubarak and notified him of the decision.

[Question] Did you feel that the decision by Jordan to resume the relations with Egypt contained some sort of a challenge?

[Answer] It is completely to the contrary, perhaps because the relations with Egypt have been so mature and firm. Therefore, continued severance of the diplomatic relations has created an abnormal situation--a situation that was, in fact, devoid of meaning. This is why the decision had been received with strong welcome in the various Jordanian circles that have considered the decision tantamount to correcting an abnormal situation that existed for a time. But if you are alluding with the word "challenge" to Arab sides, then I also say that it is the opposite. I have received congratulations from numerous Arab delegates and their understanding and appreciation of the Jordanian step has been obvious.

[Question] It has been noticed that the Egyptian-Jordanian rapprochement was preceded by indication, including Jordanian-Iraqi rapprochement and firm Egyptian-Iraq-Jordanian relations. Can the three countries form what we may call a bloc that leads to reviving the peace process in the area?

[Answer] It is wrong to imagine that the step to restore the relations between Egypt and Jordan is tantamount to forming a bloc, an axis or an alliance because if we view the step in this manner, then we would be seeking the opposite of what we are advocating, namely the restoration of full and effective Arab solidarity.

Any rapprochement and any cementing of the relations in any sphere is in fact tantamount to an open invitation to every Arab country to bolster and develop its relations with the two countries so as to create the fundamental coordination needed to enable the Arab nation to confront the serious challenges engulfing it and to rise to the level of the responsibility dictated by the situation.

[Question] Do you mean by this that the invitation is also addressed to Syria, which views this step as a step to encircle it and to liquidate the Palestinian cause?

[Answer] There is no exception of any Arab state. I imagine that the time will come when all the Arab countries will be convinced of the soundness of the step taken by Jordan and when they will see it as a step necessary for the Arab nation if this nation wants to act with the desired effectiveness in the face of the area's worsening conditions which certainly pose a threat to this nation if it continues to be as it is.

[Question] After restoration of the Egyptian-Jordanian relations, some have imagined that the step may be exploited for an attempt to expand the peace process on the basis of Reagan's initiative. The question is: Can this rapprochement revive Reagan's peace initiative, especially since Jordan had supported the initiative?

[Answer] The Jordanian step has no relationship with any plans or initiatives.

We must take into our consideration that there is more than one initiative and plan projected in the arena. There is the initiative for holding an international conference, the Fes initiative, the Egyptian-French initiative and the Reagan initiative which has been rejected by Israel. All these initiatives are projected. But the given fact of the situation must be complete and clear before any future movement. These given facts rely fundamentally on conclusion of the U.S. elections, on crystallizing the Palestinian conditions and on the development of a clear position by the new Israeli cabinet. These facts must become clear first and I hope that this will happen in the near future because the loss of time is not in the area's interest.

[Question] It has been noticed that Jordan has been recently turning toward a friendly relationship with the Soviet Union. Can the rapprochement with Egypt lead to a peace process adopted by the Soviet Union, especially since Egypt has concluded that holding an international conference can be one of the options to achieve progress in the area?

[Answer] Naturally, I cannot speak for Jordan. But the idea of holding an international conference with the participation of the Soviet Union is not new, considering that Security Council resolution No 338 does actually call for holding an international conference under the proper auspices. In fact, participation by the permanent members of the Security Council, including the Soviet Union, will serve the settlement efforts, especially when we learn that one of the important elements of the settlement, namely the element of the international guarantees that may accompany this settlement, can be offered and secured by the permanent members of the Security Council.

[Question] Is there a difference between Egypt's view and Jordan's view of the U.S. and Russian participation in the area's peace efforts?

[Answer] I imagine that the question of participation of the two super-powers in the settlement efforts is something on which all agree, first on the basis of the responsibilities of the two superpowers as permanent Security Council members and on the basis of Security Council resolution No 338 which calls for holding an international conference under the proper auspices. There is no disagreement that the United States can play a role. Rather, it is required to play a role and to intensify its efforts to find a just peaceful settlement in the area.

[Question] If President Mubarak's recent visit to Jordan has approved some sort of a strategy between Egypt and Jordan, to what degree can this contribute to a new peace structure?

[Answer] President Mubarak's visit has resulted fundamentally in translating the step to restore the relations between the two countries into a tangible reality felt by the Egyptian and Jordanian peoples, rather by all the Arab peoples. Therefore, agreement has been reached to form a committee at the highest level to lay down the foundations for following up on cooperation between the two countries in all spheres, including the trade, economic, tourism and investment spheres, the joint projects, labor affairs and maritime traffic between the two countries to link them rapidly through the Gulf of 'Aqaba. This is, of course, in addition to consultations between the two countries at the highest level possible. It suffices that President Mubarak's visit has been followed by the important visit of his highness the crown prince who was accompanied by a big official delegation, by holding the meeting of the two countries' joint committee which is headed on the Jordanian side by his highness the crown prince and on the Egyptian side by the prime minister and by the subsequent plenary meetings of the two countries' joint economic committee. On top of this, there has been the scientific and technological cooperation symposium between Egypt and Jordan.

[Question] What has Jordan's decision added to the Arab issue and to the area's current situation and can Jordan and Egypt reach a joint negotiating position that helps move the issue forward?

[Answer] Jordan's decision is a landmark on the right path to restore Arab solidarity in whose absence the Arab nation has suffered a lot. As I said at the outset of my conversation, when the given facts of the situation crystallize, then all will be required to exert maximum efforts to achieve the desired progress in the Middle East issue.

8494

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NO SIGNIFICANT CHANGES IN RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL EXPECTED

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 77, 29 Sep 84 p 21

/Article by Ihsan Bakr: "Cairo: There Is an Imbalance and It Is Tel Aviv's Responsibility To Fix It"/

/Text/ On the eve of the announcement of the new Israeli Government, more than one informed source in Egypt sought to stress that there is nothing new in Egypt's position and that Cairo would not put forward any initiative toward the Perez-Shamir government. Instead, Egypt will await Israel's next step with regard to the issues now pending between Egypt and Israel.

In addition, circles in Cairo asserted that the first challenge is to confront the economic crisis, which has now reached such proportions that it demands the unification and mobilization of all forces within the country. Perhaps this is the main factor that led President Husni Mubarak to meet with the entire range of opposition leaders in Egypt, from Fu'ad Siraj-al-Din, leader of the Wafd, to Ibrahim Shukri, head of the Labor Party, and Khalid Muhyi-al-Din, secretary general of the Grouping Party. President Mubarak put the dimensions of the economic crisis before the opposition leaders and then called on them to participate in a national conference which would bring together all the nationalist party, and popular forces to discuss the crisis. Egypt's foreign debts have reached \$18 billion. The public facilities of Cairo alone require 4 billion pounds for complete restoration over the next 5 years. The subsidies offered by the state to hold down prices reached some 2.058 billion pounds or 27 percent of the total revenues of the state. The controversial issue in Egypt now is who should receive the subsidies and what groups deserve them. It is an established fact that the subsidies now go into the pockets of undeserving individuals.

Regulating subsidies, therefore, means that they should be restricted only to a certain group of basic commodities needed by the vast majority of the people. This means that because of the current situation, the prices of some commodities must be increased. This was the basis for the decision to raise the price of Egyptian cigarettes from 35 piasters to 45 piasters in order to compensate the government for losses that had reached 160 million pounds a year paid by the state to subsidize cigarettes. This was also the basis for President Mubarak's decision that all the popular forces in Egypt must participate in these studies so that the economic decisions to be made early in November will express the will of all the Egyptian people and will not merely be determined by the highest bidder.

If the government of Kamal Hasan 'Ali is now taking responsibility for confronting the economic crisis, there is also an observed move toward broad political and diplomatic activity which began with Foreign Minister Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid's trip to New York at the head of Egypt's delegation to the 139th session of the United Nations assembly. During Dr 'Abd-al-Majid's stay in New York, Egypt will be represented in the meetings of the Nonaligned States and will attend for the first time the Islamic Conference, which is scheduled for next Thursday. In addition, Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid will represent Egypt at the meeting of the African Group, after which he will head Egypt's delegation to the meetings of the Group of 77, which represents the nations of the Third World.

During his visit to New York, Dr 'Abd-al-Majid will meet for the first time with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrey Gromyko. He will also meet with the American secretary of state, George Schultz. Overall, his schedule calls for meetings with 30 foreign ministers in various states throughout the world.

A new feature in the Egyptian move is the fact that Egypt's delegation to the United Nations will include opposition leaders for the first time. This is a new practice based on President Mubarak's view that the opposition, as a nationalist group, has the responsibility to share the major political problems that concern Egypt.

If the economic dilemma in Egypt represents the main challenge to the state in the current phase, developments in the situation in the Middle East also occupy a prominent place in the list of issues that deserve attention. Since the beginning of the elections in the Israeli Knesset and the efforts to form the Israeli Government, Egypt has been watching the situation inside Israel with great concern. Based on this and the Egyptian positions taken as a whole, we can summarize Cairo's current position on Israel in the following points:

1. Egypt does not plan to make any changes in its foreign policy at the present time. As Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid said in a recent interview with the American magazine NEWSWEEK, Egypt has a clear aim in its foreign policy: it is working for peace, stability, security, and development. These are the main principles of Egyptian foreign policy. Its starting point in this peace process is that peace must extend to the largest possible number of states in the region. While Egypt is committed to a just and total peace for the region, it also believes that Israel has forced the peace process into a real predicament during the past 2 years. The Israeli invasion of Lebanon and the Israeli actions that followed caused extreme damage to the peace process. Therefore, the new government of Israel must put forward positions that support its commitment to peace through action rather than mere words.

2. Cairo is not currently thinking of returning the Egyptian ambassador to Tel Aviv. Rather, it is up to Israel itself to rectify what it has done over the past 2 years. As Dr 'Abd-al-Majid said in an interview with AL-TADAMUN: "It is up to Israel to accept Egypt as an incontestable issue. It must realize that Egypt is an inseparable part of the Arab world. It must understand that and heed it well."

Egyptian-Israeli relations have reached a stage in which the new government of Israel must work to improve them following the invasion of Lebanon, the massacres of Sabra and Shatila, the ongoing establishment of settlements, the freezing of the Palestinian issue and the rejection of negotiations concerning Taba.

3. Cairo's position on Taba has not changed. Israel has stirred up widespread debate concerning Taba. This is a matter which has caused dismay among all Egyptian officials. Taba represents a portion of Egyptian territory. Egypt has agreed on a format for negotiations for the return of Taba to Egypt, but Israel has insisted that the negotiations be held in the city of Jerusalem. The United States offered to host the negotiations in Washington. Egypt agreed to the American offer, but Israel refused. Israel insisted again that the negotiations be held in Jerusalem, and Egypt refused.

The gist of the situation, therefore, is that the Egyptian line will remain as it has been: affirmation of Egypt's Arab role, Egyptian commitment to Arab, Islamic and African issues, a refusal to neglect the national issue of Taba, a stance of waiting and watching to see what Israel's national coalition government puts forward, and widespread diplomatic activity directed at the world's capitals.

The time from the present to the completion of the American presidential elections is a period in which the international stage is being set for suitable opportunities to begin a new round of activity. While the features of this new round of activity are not yet clear, preparation for it has already begun in both the Arab and international spheres.

8591

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DISSIDENT LABOR PARTY LEADERS EXPRESS VIEWS ON PARTY LINE

Cairo AKHIR SA'AH in Arabic No 2607, 10 Oct 84 pp 12-13

[Interview with Labor Party leaders by Zakariya Abu Hiram: "Why Have Differences Developed and Where Are They Heading"; date and place not specified]

[Text] What is going on in the Labor Party? What is the true nature of the differences in the party--differences that have become the predominant characteristic in its movement? How far will these differences go now that some leaders have frozen their membership and others have resigned and begun to form another party?

In interviews with AKHIR SA'AH, the dissidents and those breaking away from the party have revealed the causes of the differences. Ibrahim Shukri considers what is happening natural, especially since the Labor Party still in the phase of formation, even though 5 years have passed since its creation. Shukri asserts that affairs are managed democratically in the party. The dissident leaders respond by pointing out that Ibrahim Shukri manages the party like an ancient classroom [mistabah] and not as a popular organization, that the party's congress will not convene and that, even if Ibrahim Shukri succeeds in convening it, the congress will not be managed democratically because they will dictate who will be permitted to attend. What is the true nature of the differences and where are they heading?

At the outset, we interviewed 'Abd-al-Mughni Sa'id, member of the Executive Committee and of the Higher Committee, the political and ideological education secretary and member of the Editorial Board of AL-SHA'B.

[Question] It is said that the reasons for your departure from the party are due to your objection to the publication of Haykal's book in the party paper. What is your opinion?

[Sa'id] I have not left the party because of Haykal's book. There is no disagreement whatsoever between me and Haykal. My objection was to the manner in which the book was published. The question of publishing the book was supposed to be presented to the Editorial Board and to the Executive Committee but this did not happen. Moreover, I offered to review the book after its publication. But AL-SHA'B did not publish the review out of

courtesy for its author and at the expense of a party member. This is a violation of journalistic traditions, as I pointed out in my letter of resignation.

But they then alleged that the review contained an attack on the author. I published the book review in the weekly AL-'UMMAL. Whoever has read the book must have found it prejudiced. But what truly saddened me is that the Socialist Labor Party favored the opportunistic values over the struggle and revolutionary values I represent.

(Sa'id added:) Haykal's book was not the only reason for the resignation. Other reasons were the party leadership's adoption of decisions individually and without respect for the party's legitimate institutions and responsible channels. This aroused the resentment of numerous members and caused their resignation. Moreover, the Labor Party has no clear line and its activity is predominated by confusion and improvisation. For example, the statement the party chairman made 24 hours after the elections accusing the government of rigging the elections was unjustifiable and was made without consulting with us.

I was entrusted with the process of building up the party's political and ideological education. A specialized institute controlled by the party was supposed to be set up and courses were supposed to be organized. But the party procrastinated and I was not given an opportunity to engage in any activity in this important sphere. I was also asked to familiarize the party youth with socialist thought and doctrines. Accordingly, I published a series of articles on the development of socialist thought, of which 18 parts were published. Regrettably, publication of the articles was not continued on the pretext that they gave people the impression that the party is Marxist. This is untrue.

[Question] Having departed from the Labor Party, are you going to join another party or will you form a new party, which is the fashion among dissidents?

[Answer] I will become independent again. This does not prevent me from dealing with all the parties in the sphere of national action.

[Question] What is your opinion of the opposition activity in which the Labor Party is engaging in the People's Assembly?

[Answer] The four members of the party appointed to the People's Assembly have formed marginal opposition. Compared with the Wafd's opposition, the Labor Party opposition is considered feeble in form and content.

Managing Party Like Ancient Classroom

[Question] It is said that the Labor Party will hold a congress shortly. In your view, what form will this congress take?

[Answer] I hope the congress will be held on schedule and hope that the members invited to attend it will truly represent the party bases. What I

mean is that they will not bring in members according to their whims because Ibrahim Shukri runs the party like an "ancient classroom" [mistabah] and not like a political institution.

During the elections, I noticed that there was not as much interest in the party program as in distributing posters carrying Ibrahim Shukri's picture. As for the labor and workers' issues, they did not take more than a few lines in the program and no subtitle was devoted to them, unlike what the New Aafd Party did. It would have behooved the party carrying labor's name to devote greater attention to labor issues.

(Concluding, 'Abd-al-Mughni Sa'id said:) If the Labor Party persists with its present unclear intellectual line and its non-abidance by the values of democratic action, especially the value of collective leadership, it cannot be hoped that this party will achieve any degree of growth. By reviewing the outcome of the latest elections, we find that the party was dealt a crushing defeat in Cairo, Alexandria, Port Said, Suez and in the capitals of some of the major governorates where labor concentrations are found and where large numbers of dissidents and of university youth are concentrated. The party was supposed to get a large percentage of their votes.

Why I Left Party

The second interview was with Hamdi Ahmad, one of those breaking away from the Labor Party recently and a man who, it is reported, will form a new party with Ibrahim Yunis and Ahmad Farghali.

At the outset, Ahmad Farghali said: We must backtrack to talk about the reasons for my joining the Labor Party so that my opinion may be objective. I was one of the party founders and the party came to be known through me and through my serious and respected plays. In the villages, they received me as if I were one of them. The party had leaderships that were so unknown to the man on the street that one of the party's prominent leaders told me verbatim at a conference: I will not let you speak at the beginning of the conference so that people may not leave after you finish. They know that these masses have come for Hamdi Ahmad.

He added: I have struggled along with the Labor Party in all of Egypt's villages and cities in order to disseminate the party principles. I have contributed to elevating the party's word in the People's Assembly and I have not left any important topic or public issue in which I did not participate, not to mention my financial contributions during the paper's [AL-SHA'B] most severe crisis. The smallest amount I donated to support the paper was 200 pounds. I set up for them a [party] office in Bulaq with my own money.

[Question] The question now is: Why did you leave the party?

[Answer] I took myself out before they could drive me out. There is a group that feared my continued presence even though I sought no leadership. All I demanded was that the party program be implemented.

[Question] Do you think that it is normal for a member to leave a party to which he belongs in order to form another party or to join one of the existing parties?

[Answer] There is nothing to compel me to embrace the principles I shared with them as long as they have deviated from these principles. One thing is unalterable and that is my faith in Islam. Everything else is alterable. The Labor Party principles are not the prophet's Sunna. Moreover, the party's intellectual principles have not changed. What has changed is the implementation. Add to this the fact that many of those who have offered the Labor Party a lot have departed without any regret expressed over their departure.

[Question] Are you inclined to form a party with some colleagues, as has been rumored recently?

[Answer] This is not at all true. However, we are seeking an acceptable legitimate means through which to exert our efforts to establish the bases of sound democracy. We are in the phase of self-discussion and of how to engage in our activity. If there is a party closer to our ideas and principles, we will join it. If we do not find one, then we will have no alternative to forming a party to act as a legitimate platform through which to engage in our activity.

[Question] It is said that one of the reasons for your departure from the party is your failure to achieve anything in the Cairo Secretariat and that you have been harmed in your livelihood as a result of your belonging to the Labor Party?

[Answer] There is no man who can do anything by himself. Did the group in the Cairo Secretariat cooperate to achieve something inside the secretariat? As for livelihood, I have said nothing of the sort. To start with, when a man joins the opposition parties, he is in the losing scale of the balance. I have taken all this into account.

(Concluding, Hamdi Ahmad said:) I very much doubt that the Labor Party will hold its congress this year. There are no longer any serious leaders in the Labor Party ranks because all of the serious leaders have either frozen their activity or resigned. Unless Engineer Ibrahim Shukri deals with this situation quickly, the congress will be a congress of opportunists. We will meet them in 5 years to see what the Labor Party deputies have offered and what we have offered.

Currents Behind Differences

Mamduh Qinawi, the People's Assembly member and member of the Labor Party's Higher Committee, has said: In principle, the Labor Party is the target of many who seek to influence the party in such a manner as to create a flaw in this party. The departing members have exploited some situations encountered by the party, including approval of the principle of appointment, to fabricate issues out of them and to create confusion in the party.

It is supposed that when any issue is submitted to free discussion, then majority opinion and party unity are observed. Every member is entitled to disagree in opinion.

[Question] But what, specifically, is the nature of the differences?

[Answer] The differences between some members are intellectual. The party has no wings within itself. Ahmad Farghali considers himself a Nasirist. 'Abd-al-Mughni Sa'id has his ideas and is expected to form a new party. Moreover, there are members who are very much self-centered. It is an unhealthy phenomenon in political life for the individual to consider himself the focus of knowledge.

[Question] How do you interpret the presence of these differences within the Labor Party?

[Answer] The method of dialogue within the party is democratic and offers the opportunity for free expression. But the splits are caused by the attempts to impose special currents on the party ranks. For example, Ahmad Hamdi has failed to perform his role in the Cairo Secretariat and has said that his livelihood is harmed as a result of his belonging to the party. Every one of those who have left the party has his subjective motives.

[Question] In light of the current situation, where is the Labor Party heading?

[Answer] Constant change within the party is one of the fundamental duties. This is in addition to the duty of entrenching and developing the party program and to good organization. We will exert efforts to see that the next congress, scheduled to be convened next October, will produce new leaderships. The change may reach 90 percent, but it will come through the party's basic rule of rebuilding objectively. The new party leaders will be elected, not selected. After election of the party's executive committees, these committees will vote on election of the new party chairman.

Confrontation With Party Chairman

For the picture of the differences within the party to be complete, we had to confront Engineer Ibrahim Shukri, the party chairman, who said:

The Labor Party is a popular party and it relies on the trust and support of the citizens. It does not depend on governmental influence, for example, or on the support of currents that may have their external extensions, even if indirectly. It is a party that welcomes all the elements that believe in its principles and program. The connection that governs the member's bond with the party always relies on free will and on the member's belief that his presence in the party is out of conviction and that he finds himself to be a part of the party. This is why there are circumstances, occasions and positions in which opinions disagree in terms of compatibility with principles and of adoption of the means to coordinate objectives.

Here, we may find those who believe that their disagreement with the party is the result of the party's adoption of positions which they do not find convincing. They may also believe that their opposition within the party is not enough to influence the party to follow the currents in which they believe and that it is better for them to express their opposition by freezing their activity or by resigning. Others may resort to publishing articles in partisan papers to explain their viewpoints, to achieve the victory they seek for their viewpoint and to influence as much as possible the party's various bases that are spread throughout the republic.

[Question] In your opinion, what are the causes that have led to these differences in the party and caused some to freeze their membership and others to resign?

[Answer] I want to point out that the party's position, its principles and its history make it the competitor of more than one of the existing parties. In a climate of competition, there may be direct or indirect encouragement to attract elements from the party to weaken its ranks and to have some of its leaders change their positions.

At the outset of the interview, I noted that there may be different viewpoints on some positions. There is no doubt that the recent election campaign and the principle of waging or not waging it constituted one of the important positions on which opinions may disagree. Moreover, the opinions did actually disagree on the issue of appointment to the People's Assembly after announcement of the election results. Therefore, you find that we in the party have gone through a period in which the causes for disagreement among the members accumulated. We have been constantly eager that the decision on positions be made through the democratic course and method by submitting the issues, hearing the various opinions and providing full opportunity for discussion and, then, for taking the [majority] opinion and adhering to it.

[Question] Given the presence of differences and of the departure of some from the party ranks, will this influence the convocation or non-convocation of the party's congress, which is scheduled to be held next October? What are the main features of this congress given the assertion by many that it will not convene this year?

[Answer] The Executive Committee has not yet set the date for convocation of the congress. But it is certain that it will not be beyond next December. Preparation for the congress may consume these coming weeks, which will be charged with simultaneous activities. I would have preferred to have all the elements with differing opinions stay in the party so that they may present these opinions to the congress, which has the right to review everything.

Moreover, the next congress will, incidentally, elect a new party leadership comprised of a party chairman and of the party's Executive Committee, which, for the first time, will include 30 members. Thus, any changes compatible with the opinions of the majority of the party bases can be translated

into duties in a democratic way and without much clamor, from which only Labor Party rivals benefit.

I apologize to all the colleagues who have participated for a period or periods of time, who have shouldered responsibilities and who have exerted efforts to form the party. I believe that disagreement in opinion does not spoil friendship. But I will always abide firmly by the democratic method of dialogue.

Party Will Not Be Eroded

[Question] Some assert that these differences may lead to eroding the Labor Party from within, not to mention weakening the cadres existing in the party as a result of the departure of strong cadres from it. Can the party chairman explain to us the current situation within the Labor Party?

[Answer] I would like to point out, without straying from the truth, that the Labor Party is still in the phase of formation.

It has always been my assessment that we have to wage several election campaigns before we stand firmly on our feet among the masses and before we develop our bases and cadres in all parts of the republic. Despite this picture which may give some the impression that the party is being eroded or that the party bases are weak, I believe that the party is making daily gains and that since waging the election campaign, the party is stronger and better organized than before and that the campaign has given rise to new, strong and firm elements. Tests and positions are what actually show the elements capable of survival.

I do not wish to embark on an argument with anybody in this regard but I will say that the next 3 months will prove the soundness of my viewpoint that the party is proceeding on a path that is making this party stronger by the day. The announced election results show that we are the third party behind the ruling party and the Wafd Party in the number of votes won. I consider this to be a good base on which we can build, even though these votes have not been translated into seats in the Assembly because of the well-known 8 percent rule.

[Question] Some fault the Labor Party for an unclear intellectual line and for failure to adhere to the values of democratic action, especially the value of collective leadership, which are among the causes leading to the emergence of differences within the party. What is your opinion?

[Answer] It may always be beneficial to clarify the intellectual line. I believe that clarification of the party's intellectual line requires a more specific definition and greater explanation in the party program than the definition and explanation reflected by the party positions and activities in the preceding period. This is what we will be working for in the coming period so that an intellectual paper may be approved by the coming congress. As for the undemocratic nature of the party's decision-making, I believe that this does apply to what is actually taking place in

the party [as published], considering that decisions or positions that have been the subject of disagreement were discussed at the party's various levels. I welcome any modifications approved by the congress and capable of contributing to underlining the democratic approach in the party's decision-making. We act in accordance with and abide by what the congress decides.

[Question] Most of the opposition parties rely in the person of the party chairman. Some even believe that a party is represented in the person of its chairman and that this affects the form of the dialogue, of democratic action and of the party's future. What is your opinion?

[Answer] There is no doubt that the leadership of a party, especially when the party is first formed, is of great importance to the party and to judging the party. In the latest application of the multiple-party system, our parties are still in their infancy and a lot of what is contained in the parties' programs may be similar, thus making the personality and history of a party chairman an important element of comparison when the citizen selects the party to which he gives his vote. Most of the existing parties consider their programs and principles to be influenced by the principles of the 23 July revolution. Moreover, the law dictates to all the parties some of the principles contained in the constitution. This is how the action system is established. The constant focus on who the party representative may be intensifies this feeling that the party chairman has his major influence on the party's positions and tendencies.

I hope that we will attain the situation whereby the party chairman and all its leaderships reflect one thing, namely the precise translation of the tendencies of the party bases.

No Individualism in Party

[Question] The phenomenon of the departure of a member from a party--a member who is supposed to embrace the principles of the party or who would not have otherwise joined it--and of breaking away to form another party or to join one of the existing parties has become obvious in the opposition parties. How do you interpret this phenomenon?

[Answer] This phenomenon is concurrent with the concept of multiple parties, especially in light of formation of the parties in the circumstances which initiated the latest experiment, namely the presence of a law called the law regulating the parties, which we consider to be in conflict with fundamental principles and with the spirit of the constitution, and in the presence of conditions that govern the formation of party. These conditions increase the possibilities of splits and of the emergence of splinter branches from the parties formed. This is a healthy and normal manifestation. In our old history, we find that the Wafd Party, formed during the 1919 revolution, gave rise to numerous parties which were a part of the Wafd when it was first formed, including for example, the Constitutionals, the Sa'dists and the Wafdist Bloc, meaning that the single party split into four parties. The leaderships of all those parties were initially in the first leadership of the Wafd.

[Question] Some dissidents from the Labor party assert that your viewpoint of rejecting the principle of appointment is sound, as made evident, according to their claim, by the fact that the Labor Party opposition in the Assembly is now marginal. What is your comment?

[Answer] I do not know where this judgment comes from. If the judgment is on the past session, then the Labor Party opposition was strong in numerous cases. If the decision was then made on the basis of the majority, then there is no disgrace in this for the Labor Party. But if the statement applies to the Labor Party's action in the current session, then the party has performed its full role in the session which has started with the cabinet statement and with the few sessions held--sessions in which some agreements have been discussed and some issues raised.

[Question] 'Abd-al-Mughni Sapid was supposed to prepare new party cadres through a training institute. But according to Sa'id's statements, the party procrastinated and did not give him the opportunity to engage in any activity, thus being compelled to resign from the party at a time when the party needs new cadres. What is your opinion?

[Answer] 'Abd-al-Mughni Sa'id is an excellent personality with his history in the national and educational field. Even though the party has not succeeded in forming, bringing into existence and continuing an organization to help with educating and training party cadres in an organized manner, efforts were actually exerted by Sa'id and by the party to hold some courses. Generally, I cannot say that the party's resources are big. They still rely on scattered and individual efforts. In the coming phase, we will give the matter attention so that the situation may stabilize and the goal may be achieved.

[Question] Some allege that the party leaders make individual decisions and do not respect the party's legitimate institutions and that this has forced many members to submit their resignation. What is your opinion?

[Answer] This is not at all true because all the decisions made by the party are submitted to the party's various levels. There are no individualistic decisions.

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AL-AHALI NEWSPAPER CRITICIZED

Cairo MAYU in Arabic 22 Oct 84 p 7

[Editorial by Sabri Abu-al-Majd]

[Text] Those who follow AL-AHALI newspaper--and they are few--will see that for the past several weeks it has not been, by any journalistic or political standard, an opposition paper like all opposition papers in many democratic countries; rather, it has turned into a purely weekly publication that calls for a departure from law and order.

Most unfortunately, AL-AHALI no longer adheres to the principles of constructive democratic national dialogue which works to serve the people and solve their problems; rather, it has come to adhere to nothing but demagoguery, anarchy, and clamorous, clanging slogans which only bring ruin and destruction upon our Arab nation. Regrettably, AL-AHALI no longer calls for social peace as stipulated by the constitution, and which the Grouping party sticks to in all its official papers; rather, it has begun to call for class warfare and a revolution against everything sacred to the Egyptian people.

Also it--AL-AHALI--no longer criticizes the government the way all opposition papers criticize the governments which they oppose; rather, it has begun to denounce it and incite the masses against it. AL-AHALI newspaper is not content with directing its arrows and poison at Egyptian domestic policy, rather it has begun to aim those arrows and that poison at our foreign policy, even though all political observers all over the world agree that Egyptian foreign policy has not previously achieved the successes it has during these past 3 years.

One of the things that hurts the soul more and more is that some of AL-AHALI's writers persist in sowing doubts about Egypt's decision-making, when they, even more than others, know that Egypt and Egypt alone is the one who makes its decisions and choices. Even the resumption of relations between Egypt and Jordan, which was welcomed by all Arab people from the Atlantic to the Gulf except for the Syrian and Libyan regimes, did not escape their barbs. Even worse, those writers said about the process of resuming Egyptian-Jordanian relations that the outcome would not be acceptable even to Egypt's worst enemies.

Observers are greatly perplexed as to how an Egyptian newspaper can attack Egyptian policy towards Israel, when the Israeli leaders themselves attack Egyptian policy and denounce its pure Arab direction and strength. But the strangest thing that AL-AHALI has resorted to was that during the week that the Nile Valley Parliament was meeting, a historic event the likes of which have not been heard of in our modern history, it insisted on attacking President Ja'far Numayri while he and our brothers, the representatives of sister Sudan, were in Egypt. Furthermore, it based the attacks that it published on the British newspaper THE OBSERVER, as if the British newspaper THE OBSERVER had become an authority whose words were sacred to AL-AHALI and not subject to contradiction.

AL-AHALI--for example--calls for parties, but in countries where the public sector forms the basis of the national economy, parties are considered a national crime not only against the rights of the masses, but also against the rights of the workers themselves.

We honestly ask the socialist paper AL-AHALI whether the right to form parties is granted in the Soviet Union or any other socialist countries besides it. What we know, and we have the constitutions of the Soviet Union and many of the socialist countries in our hands, is that the right to form parties does not exist; rather, parties in those countries are considered a crime against state security and the perpetrators are most severely punished. But AL-AHALI is not satisfied with that, rather it sets out to create confusion and publishes news that is not at all true. It attributes to Field Marshal Muhammad 'Abd-al-Halim Abu Ghazalah things he never said; indeed, the mix-up between Dr Usamah al-Baz and Dr Faruq al-Baz was deliberate.

I was grieved when I read in the latest issue of AL-AHALI what was entitled "The Heroes of October: What Have We Done to Them?" For the record, in my view as a journalist, AL-AHALI has not given the October War the glorification and immortalization that are its due. Also, when it does speak about it, it leaves question marks that are not at all true. Shedding crocodile tears, AL-AHALI said in one issue: An ordinary name for a man who is not so; he earned the highest military medal of the republic during the October War, was one of the Badr Forces, the Third Field Army, led by the victorious martyr Karim Balk, the colonel who refused to march behind the formations according to military procedure, but advanced at the head of the forces and was the first of the martyrs. AL-AHALI continues in its inflammatory style asking: What would this hero say when he sees on television how the heroes and martyrs of the war are being celebrated, and so on.

We must tell AL-AHALI that it made a stupid mistake when it mentioned that the victorious colonel Karim was one of the martyrs. The truth, which I will whisper onto the ear of my colleague AL-AHALI, is that the victorious Colonel Karim did not die a martyr in the October War, but rather--may God grant him long life--he is still alive and is currently working as commander of the southern military region, and he is now on the general staff. For the information of my colleague AL-AHALI, I contacted him by phone at the southern command headquarters, and heard from him that he had been surprised by what he had read in AL-AHALI, just as he had been surprised by the articles which

AL-AHALI had published, which served no purpose other than to stir up people's emotions. Even when AL-AHALI writes about the October War, and sheds crocodile tears over its martyrs, it is not accurate in what it writes, and this alone is sufficient proof that most of what our dear, well-mannered and polite colleague publishes has no basis in fact.

And when I say our dear, well-mannered "polite" colleague, I mean what I say. A few weeks ago, I criticized--most politely--a position of Prof Fathi Radwan. I had noticed a shift in position. I had nothing at all against Prof Fathi Radwan personally, and I only said that I feel sad when I read in some Arab newspapers things similar to what is published in opposition papers. I never said that Prof Fathi Radwan had relations with any foreign parties, Arab or non-Arab, and I would not say that, because in spite of my disagreements with him, what he writes these days has only my respect and appreciation. Then, in every case of political disagreement, I am careful not to descend from the high standard to which I have committed myself, and which I will adhere to as long as I live.

The polite, well-mannered newspaper AL-AHALI insisted on writing its editorial about me, in which it was said I was not worthy of being under Prof Fathi Radwan's feet, then it seized the sword of terror and threats and tried to drive it into my throat, censuring me for what I had written, similar to what many others including Ihsan 'Abd-al-Qaddus and Muhammad Hasanayn Haykal had written, about the (retribution) incident on 15 November 1943, over 40 years ago. Even if what I wrote had been a secret, it would have ended with the passage of time. However, our dear, well-mannered, "polite" colleague, even while addressing its colleagues, resorts to using such language, the least of which is "beneath one's feet" and so on.

In any case, I would not have continued with this fight, if our colleague AL-AHALI had not gone too far in stirring up the masses, and had disregarded its interests and those of the masses to such an extent that one could not keep quiet about it.

All that I hope and wish for, as a patriotic Egyptian who has worked, regardless of what AL-AHALI's lies say, in the national field for over 40 years, during which I gave and did not take a foot and did not benefit from our colleague AL-AHALI's returning to its senses, is that we guard the right of God and the right of the nation with it, that it refrain from agitation and stirring up emotions, and that it adheres to constructive, objective, democratic dialogue, for the sake of Egypt and Egypt alone, and for the sake of the youth of this and future generations.

Let the opposition papers be an example of constructive opposition, not of agitation and violence.

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'ABD-AL-MAJID DISCUSSES CURRENT ISSUES

Cairo MAYU in Arabic 15 Oct 84 p 5

[Interview with Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, foreign minister, by Hidayat 'Abd-al-Nabi; date and place not specified]

[Text] Before the start of President Husni Mubarak's 4th year in power, the Arab nation noted the resumption of full diplomatic relations between Egypt and Jordan because of a courageous decision taken by His Majesty King Husayn while the Arab world was celebrating the Muslim New Year.

At the beginning of the 2nd year of President Husni Mubarak's assuming primary responsibility in Egypt, the Nile Valley celebrated the signing of the integration treaty between Egypt and the Sudan.

And when President Mubarak chose Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid as his new foreign minister in place of Mr Kamal Hasan 'Ali, there was much talk about the importance of Egypt's future Arab role.

Since Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid took the helm of Egyptian foreign policy, daily papers and news agencies have been pursuing him, so it has been difficult, given this international throng caused by media interest in him, to hold a private, comprehensive interview. The development in Egyptian-Jordanian relations came not as a comprehensive interview but rather as a chance to discuss quietly what is said about the revival of Arab unity. In the Nile Valley there is integration with the Sudan; in the Arab East rapid steps are being taken towards Arab cohesion. The first question had to do with the type of "Arab unity." Is it the same as before, or has it been burdened by Arab experiences and events since 1948, experiences that were crowned and anointed by the October war and the Egyptian peace policy?

The first part of MAYU's interview with the foreign minister centers around these questions, and the second part deals with some aspects of what took place in the 39th session of the United Nations General Assembly.

Herein follows the text of the interview with Dr 'Ismat 'Abd-al-Majid, the foreign minister, on the new concept of Arab unity:

Arab Unity: A New Concept

[Question] What is the new concept of Arab unity in light of the president's visit to Jordan and the experiment at integration between Egypt and the Sudan, especially since the Nile Valley parliament is opening today?

[Answer] On this occasion I must start by extending my thanks and deep appreciation to the Jordanian leadership and our brothers the Jordanian people for the welcome given to the Egyptian delegation headed by President Mubarak during its historic visit to Jordan.

Of course, the president's visit to Jordan amounted to his setting out to strengthen and consolidate relations between two Arab nations linked by a common history, hopes and a single future.

The Egyptian-Jordanian summit talks did not touch upon the subject of unity between the two countries in its constitutional or legal sense, for Egypt and Jordan, with their sophistication and political awareness, have learned the lessons of hasty attempts at unification in our Arab world, all of which have ended in failure. Therefore the goal of the political leadership of the two countries during the summit meeting was to strengthen and consolidate bilateral relations and to establish cooperation between the two countries in all fields as a first step towards establishing firm, strong relations between the two countries.

The talks in this area brought forth extremely important results, foremost of which was the agreement on the formation of a joint Egyptian-Jordanian higher committee, headed by the prime ministers of both countries, that would establish cooperation programs in various fields and monitor their implementation. Growing out of this higher committee will be other bilateral specialized committees that will have the task of exploring ways for cooperation and means of expanding them that will guarantee that common interests will be realized, developed and expanded. In this field we have had experience with fraternal Sudan which will guide us, that being the experience at integration between the two countries which day after day bears fruit and which is considered an example to be followed in our Arab region.

[Question] With the future possibility of union between Egypt and Jordan along the lines of the integration with the Sudan, might this coordination and joint action be extended to include the Gulf Cooperation Council?

[Answer] The cornerstone that Arab relations must be based upon is constant coordination and the need for joint action since our cause is one and our problems and hopes are one. Without coordination and joint action aimed at reaching a unified position that will be able to confront the serious challenges that our region is facing today, we will not be able to overcome the problems which confront us.

Such a step will require courage, wisdom, and an awareness of the reality that currently exists, for we have had enough of empty, useless slogans and rhetoric. In any case, the spirit of the Egyptian-Jordanian summit meeting and

of its outcome is not restricted to the two nations, rather it is open to any sister Arab nation which is endowed with such a spirit as the new one in relations between Egypt and Jordan.

Arab Reactions

[Question] How would you describe Arab reactions to the resumption of relations between Egypt and Jordan?

[Answer] The courageous decision by Jordan had excellent reactions from the Arab brothers with whom I met in New York.

Egypt pays no heed to the stiff-necked reactions of just two countries, Libya and Syria, because the motives behind them are well known to us. As I have said many times, Egypt's door is always open to any Arab brother, and we hope that the other Arab nations will follow the example of His Majesty King Husayn in his bold and daring step, so that we can revive the Arab solidarity for which our region presently strives.

The Palestine National Council

[Question] What is your view of the upcoming Palestine National Council, and what are its priorities in Your Excellency's work?

[Answer] The convening of the Palestine National Council faced a number of obstacles, most important of which was Syrian opposition to it even though the legal quorum required for holding it had been obtained, and in spite of the presence of a Palestinian majority supporting Yasir 'Arafat's position. We hope that our Palestinian brothers will be able to overcome the difficulties facing them so they will be able to organize their affairs and come out with a unified position for facing the challenges which the region is experiencing.

Occupied Palestinian Lands

[Question] Your Excellency, what is the Islamic reaction to the Egyptian initiative on the occupied Palestinian lands?

[Answer] During my speech to the United Nations General Assembly, I put forward an Egyptian initiative concerning al-Azhar University and all the religious institutions throughout Egypt extending aid and assistance to the people of the occupied Palestinian lands in all educational, cultural and religious fields.

When I met with the Palestine Liberation Organization's delegation headed by Faruq Qaddumi, the delegation expressed its great interest in and deep appreciation for this Egyptian initiative, and it was agreed that there would be coordination between the Egyptian delegation and the Liberation Organization's delegation to the United Nations in presenting a draft resolution on this matter to the Islamic Conference so a resolution on implementing the initiative could be passed.

We, the Arab World, and America

[Question] Your Excellency, what does your meeting in New York with some Arab foreign ministers mean?

[Answer] My meetings with some brother Arab foreign ministers came within the framework of continuous contacts, which were never severed, between Egypt and its sister Arab nations, for in spite of the absence of diplomatic relations between Egypt and some Arab nations, we have strong ties with the Arab nations in various fields, and Egypt puts its weight behind Arab rights, whether in the Security Council--since Egypt is a member in it--or in various international gatherings, and also in our contacts with the concerned parties in order to reach a permanent solution to the Middle East problem. Egypt's positions are clear with regard to the many problems of the region, foremost of which are the Palestinian question, the Gulf war and the Lebanese problem.

[Question] Where is the Arab world headed now that we are on the threshold of a new American administration?

[Answer] The Arab world now stands at the crossroads. The events of the current phase are following one another in rapid succession, and we must all catch up with them so we will be able to deal with them and influence them before they leave their marks on us. The question now is: To be or not to be. What we Arabs must do now is define precisely what we want and how we can achieve it. Before we ask others to take positions, we must be aware of what is going on around us and deal with events before they overtake us and cause us to miss opportunities that recur only every 10 years.

The Red Sea Conference

[Question] What are the Egyptian proposals for ensuring the safety of shipping in the Red Sea?

[Answer] In New York I met with most of foreign ministers of nations bordering on the Red Sea, and there was complete agreement on the need for holding a conference on the safety of the Red Sea in which all nations bordering on it would participate, and it is expected that this conference will be held next November or December.

As one of the countries overlooking this important shipping route, and since one of the most important waterways in the world, the Suez Canal, passes through its territory, Egypt feels that the recent events in the Red Sea have established the need for coordination and cooperation among the nations overlooking it in the fields of counter-terrorism, exchange of information, and laying down joint plans for ensuring the safety of shipping in this waterway which at this time enjoys great strategic importance as a result of the continuation of the Gulf war.

America and Hot Issues

[Question] In light of your meeting with Mr Shultz, where does America stand with regard to the hot issues of the region?

[Answer] There are constant contacts and consultations at all levels between Egypt and the United States, because the United States is a participant in the peace process in the Middle East--as President Reagan reaffirmed in his speech before the United Nations General Assembly.

I have gone to Washington and met with President Reagan, and handed him a letter from President Mubarak which contained Egypt's position on all issues of the region, and during the meeting I sensed that there was much overlap in Egyptian and American points of view towards those issues.

I also met in New York with American Secretary of State Shultz and some of his assistants, and during these meetings I concentrated on the need to begin the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Lebanon and on the necessity of taking practical steps towards solving the Palestinian problem in its entirety.

We expect the United States--since it shares in the responsibility of bringing about peace in the region--to help in getting Israel to withdraw from Lebanon in the shortest time possible.

The Soviet Union

[Question] What were the most important points of agreement after the meeting with Gromyko, and what are the chances of reviving the idea of the international conference?

[Answer] My meeting with the Soviet foreign minister Andrey Gromyko was a good opportunity for us to exchange views on matters which concern the two countries. The Soviet Union is a great power which has its interests in the region, and Egypt welcomes any constructive role the Soviet Union might play. There are points of agreement in the views of the two countries on the need to solve the Middle East problem peacefully in a way that would include the just and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people. Egypt for its part supports any initiative that includes the just and legitimate rights of the Palestinian people and which has the approval of all concerned nations. In this regard there is the initiative by the Secretary General of the United Nations which calls for holding an international conference on peace for the Middle East, and talks are still going on to persuade all parties to participate in the international conference.

Autonomy

[Question] In light of your meeting with Shamir, what are the chances of reviving the autonomy talks, progress towards the Taba talks, withdrawal from southern Lebanon?

[Answer] I met with Mr Yitzhaq Shamir in New York at his request, and I again reaffirmed Egypt's firm stand on the need for Israel to remove the obstacles it

has erected in the face of the peace issue, foremost of which being Israel's withdrawal from Lebanon. One can say that there has been some progress in the Israeli position in this direction, because the new Israeli government has expressed its willingness to withdraw from Lebanon, and it no longer insists on a concurrent withdrawal of Syrian forces as well. We hope that Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres will be able to put forward a plan for withdrawing from Lebanon during his visit to the United States.

Regarding the Taba problem, I reaffirmed to Mr Shamir Egypt's clear and well-known position on the need to refer the matter to arbitration, and I demanded that there be movement in that direction.

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AL-BAZ DISCUSSES RELATIONS WITH ARAB COUNTRIES

Cairo AKHBAR AL-YAWM in Arabic 6 Oct 84 p 7

[Interview with Usama al-Baz, Egyptian envoy, by Muhammad 'Umar: "King Husayn Did Not Decide to Resume Relations with Egypt For the Sake of a Specific Settlement"; date and place not specified]

[Text] After Dr Usama al-Baz returned from Amman AKHBAR AL-YAWM had this conversation with him on the results of his trip; the Arab position in general; Egypt's relations with Iraq, Saudi Arabia and Syria; and on his views concerning the Arab summit conference called for by Hasan II, King of Morocco.

[Question] When will the Egyptian and Jordanian ambassadors assume their respective posts in Cairo and Amman?

[Answer] The agreement between ourselves and the Jordanian government on the exchange of ambassadors in the near future has already been concluded, and it is a question of days. We are now in the first week of October, and in my estimation, on the third week the two ambassadors will have taken up their duties in each of the two capitals.

[Question] Who is the candidate for the post of Egypt's ambassador to Jordan?

[Answer] The nominating phase is still going on, and as soon as a choice is made and there is agreement by the two countries on the name of the ambassador, on the basis of the names that they have, this will be announced.

[Question] We want to know the current thinking between President Mubarak and King Husayn, on the basis of your meeting with the king, and what is the motive behind Jordan's taking this step?

[Answer] I went to Amman to meet with King Husayn and delivered a letter to him from President Mubarak. The letter had two parts. The first expressed the appreciation of the president and the Egyptian people for the step taken by King Husayn, not to be considered a step regarding Egypt or the Egyptian people only, but to be considered a national step taken in regard to the Arab cause. And when Jordan approached this step and ventured

to take it, this was not done because of the approach of peace, of Camp David, or of any fixed solution. Even though we are watching very carefully because of our strong desire that Jordan's approach was not because of some objective or a fixed solution, we are at a point at which no new solutions have been brought up and there is at this time no actual movement toward a new solution.

But at best the present stage is one of preparation for movement that will come later, especially after the American elections and after the new administration takes hold. The matter needs several more months before there is any movement.

Then there is the new element of the resumption of talks between the United States and the Soviet Union after their having been cut off for a long time. A phase that encourages contacts has begun. We do not want to say that they are deliberations in order for them to agree on the arrangement of conditions in various places in the world. Although their meetings did not include the Middle East, these continued contacts will become a factor that can take it into account. Through these contacts new ideas can be discussed, such as holding an international summit at a stipulated stage to deal with the question of the Middle East and the question of a comprehensive settlement of the problem, especially the Palestinian dimension.

For all these reasons we can say that Jordan did not advance a fixed settlement, but rather did advance Arab solidarity and the idea of the one Arab movement, in the shadow of the existing fragmentation and disintegration and in the face of imminent collapse. So there is fear for the general Arab position, and consequently, that this will not lead to achievement of the minimum of pan-Arab interests.

Dr Usama al-Baz added: Therefore the king's view was sharp and historic, and the move toward resumption of official relations between Egypt and Jordan is to be considered a step toward correcting the general Arab position in support of the Arab forces and Arab solidarity. And this is a substantiative point, since it is best that these be used with respect to other parties, hence it would lead to establishing a cohesive Arab front that can deal with the problems that come up. Here you can become acquainted with the thinking of President Mubarak and King Husayn on handling those problems.

The problems brought up are numerous and pressing. The problem of Israeli withdrawal: we want the withdrawal to take place as soon as possible, and we do not want excuses from some for delaying. Then there is the Iraq-Iran war. We find it most unfortunate that the Arab states have diverse positions. Our position in Egypt is that the war must be ended as soon as possible. Its prolongation is damaging to the national interests, and not just to Iraqi interests only, but I believe that it is also harmful to Iran's interests.

Also the Palestinian question cannot be left on the "shelf" for long. It is regrettable that the liberation organization is almost incapable of

holding a meeting of the national council. This divisiveness in itself is leading to paralysis of the Palestinian movement, weakening its position, and so on. There are occasions on which the Palestinian question should be brought up even if no solution is brought out. For example there is the European bloc. Europe will be meeting soon and will explore once again the urgent international problems. The Palestinian question must be among the foremost of these, and we will have a fixed objective in this matter, which is to obtain a new resolution from the European group, in order for it to be a part of the Venice declaration.

Of the questions that the Israeli government cannot ignore, regardless of their implications and the difficulties that may limit its freedom, because of having created them and the delicate balance within it, all this does not take away the fact that it has a duty to change its policy, especially regarding the circumstances of the Palestinians on the West Bank and in the Gaza Strip. Therefore it is necessary to break the current deadlock and have a continuous dialogue, whether within the government or in the Israeli political community.

Secondly: It is necessary that one move from a forceful position, and consequently the Palestine Liberation Organization must have an independent stable existence and the Palestinians must have clarity of vision in regard to what is acceptable and not acceptable and to what the choices are within the framework of the peace move.

From this premise both the Jordanian people and King Husayn have felt the need for the move. And the point of beginning is always in restoring relations with Egypt, because it is not possible for the Arab World to be in solidarity while there is this rift in the relation structure. Time has confirmed that Egypt is the state with the greatest ability to act, although all the pacts we have signed and the policies we have aimed for cannot limit our freedom of action.

Another aspect of my meeting with the king was consultation in regard to the present Arab posture and how we are to begin moving in the face of it. His Majesty the King will start with the many international gatherings and is concerned with removing problems. The Palestinian issue is not a national obligation for Jordan only, but is also a legal obligation to the residents of the West Bank.

Then Jordan herself is exposed to Israeli threats. For example we find that Sharon and Meir Kahane are of the opinion that Jordan constitutes part of the historic land of Israel, and so can be an object of Israeli ambitions.

Therefore it is essential that the Arab States stand by Jordan, and there must be a unified Arab conception regarding this. So this step by Jordan came as a natural result of the collective interests also.

[Question] Did you meet with Yasir 'Arafat during your Amman visit? And what is the Organization's position regarding Jordan's move?

[Answer] There was no meeting between myself and Mr Yasir 'Arafat, but there was nothing to prevent a meeting with him at any time. The question of our contacting the Organization is an open one, and we do not consider it a sensitive issue. All Palestinians, with the exception of a small minority, accept the importance of establishing relations with the Organization. Representatives of the Palestinian groups met in Aden and adopted a few resolutions. We expect that the Organization will settle the internal situation itself and settle on positions that will enable it to regain its capacity to act. It is odd that there is a limitation on the Organization that restricts its freedom to be in contact with one of the biggest Arab countries that backs the Palestinian cause.

[Question] President Mubarak described you as the Egyptian envoy. Did you meet with other Arab heads of state?

[Answer] Contacts between Egypt and many of the Arab states were not broken off despite the severance of diplomatic relations because of much of the leadership of the Arab states, in east and west, and we on our part have welcomed this consultation and the view that the relation between Egypt and the rest of the Arab states is a relationship of destiny that should not be frozen or suspended.

We believe that contact is more important than diplomatic relations. Relations are not an objective but a means for coordinating our positions.

[Question] The expectation was that resumption of relations with Iraq would be in the forefront, but so far this has not been the case. What is your interpretation of Iraq's position?

[Answer] Any Egyptian is entitled to expect, considering the givens which he can perceive in the area, that Iraq will be among the first states to take this step. This was also our expectation, not because of information, but from the assessment that it would seem strange to us for the relations to remain severed, even though a formality, at a time when Egypt is playing a prominent role in bringing an end to the Iraq-Iran war and at a time when relations between Iraq and [certain] Arab states are aiding the other side in the war materially with arms, ammunition, and also with political help.

We are assisting Iraq with a specific request, which is to end the war. We believe the Iranian position to be obstinate. The Arabs must rally around Iraq because the lack of a clear stand by the Arabs invites international solution of the situation. There are foreign countries whose trade and economic interests favor the status quo.

Perhaps Iraq has been too occupied with the war, and this is a situation that imposes daily demands on the Iraqi government which do not afford an opportunity for consideration of other matters.

We are not yearning to establish relations, but we believe that this is a national duty. So long as the historic mistake remains it will become deeper and after a while changing will be more involved.

[Question] The forthcoming Arab summit meeting called for by Morocco, what is your impression on this matter?

[Answer] Is it for clearing the Arab atmosphere? If so, then the issues that will disturb Arab serenity must be specified before the conference. And then efforts must be made to limit conflict among the Arab states accordingly.

And when one of the confrontation states comes forward and restores its relations with Egypt out of its full awareness and view of Arab reality, this may build bridges for cooperation. And I believe that this is a situation, the rallying to which will have a sense that the issue is becoming urgent and is being brought up in the conscience of each Arab country. And this subject cannot be deferred for any time, but a unified stance must be taken on Arab solidarity.

I do not suggest here that this will take place in collective fashion, but this will be the position of the majority. From this we can be certain that the Arab nation is capable of dealing with the issues and problems that face it.

[Question] The meeting may have negative results, or produce questioning of Jordan concerning her resumption of relations despite her previous commitment in the Baghdad resolutions.

[Answer] Is there an agenda for this conference? Or is it just a general discussion? We believe that there cannot be a questioning of Jordan on the step she has taken because the resolution that was adopted concerning the membership of Egypt is an invalid resolution since the invitation to the Baghdad meeting was not sent in the legal manner, through the Arab League, which alone has the formal and legal right to send an invitation. These meetings take place in the framework of the League, otherwise they become regional gatherings. Secondly, what the conference came out with were not obligatory resolutions, but were merely recommendations, and not resolutions.

There was guidance on freezing relations with Egypt, not severing them. In addition, there are three Arab states that complied with this guidance and other things. They are the Sudan, the Sultanate of Oman, and Somalia. No one has questioned them for these 2 years.

It is believed that this meeting, called for by King Hasan II, will bring up the question of how the other Arab states will deal with the new situation, and will this conference free those states from adhering to the Baghdad conference guidance and give them freedom of action. We want maximum clarification in order to learn the objective in calling for this conference. We view Morocco as a friendly state and we cannot take a hostile approach to this development because, as you know, Morocco was one of the first states to consider making a decision like this.

From a realistic standpoint, there are vigorous arguments among the Arab states that, in my view, prevent the holding of a summit conference now.

[Question] How do you describe our relations with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, both the official and the popular?

[Answer] Our relationship with Saudi Arabia is friendly and sincere. We view her as an ally and a sister to us. Historically there are special relations between us and Saudi Arabia as well as the Saudi people. There are exchanges of messages between the president and the king on special occasions. But despite the fact that the recent break did not affect the depth of these relations, it has had an effect on the coordination of positions between us and on the clarification of activity.

[Question] Is the day coming when relations between Egypt and Syria will improve and there will be official visits between the two countries?

[Answer] Syria will not be, nor has she been, an opponent to relations. We are not in a state of hostility because Syria is more than a sister state to us. The companionship of arms, the long road, history, and the trials through which we were liberated did not come from a vacuum. And under no circumstances can the importance of the relations between Cairo and Damascus be ignored or minimized. In building good relations with a number of Arab states, Egypt must see to it that Syria is among the first. We are looking at everything that has been happening in relations between ourselves and Syria since 1975 because there was not just a difference in opinion, but a difference in method and implementation.

I believe that this is a temporary phase and it will end. We look forward to the day when our relations with Syria will improve.

[Question] Is there any Soviet activity toward restoring relations between Cairo and Damascus?

[Answer] We are neither acting nor dealing with any Arab country in the framework of our relationship with any foreign country. We have our own direct style in dealing with the Arab states.

12496

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SIGNIFICANCE OF BALFOUR ANNIVERSARY EXAMINED

London AL-AHRAM: AL-TAB'AH AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic 5 Nov 84 p 7

[Editorial by Rajab al-Banna: "On Balfour Promise Anniversary"]

[Text] Like it or not, the day of 2 November will continue to be engraved in the Arab mind, reminding us of the Balfour promise which constituted the beginning of the Arab world's tragedy with which started the biggest political crime and series of linked human crimes. Prior to this date, history had never before known a promise given to grant land on which its people live to another people from outside the area complaining of dispersal and seeking for themselves land on which to establish their own state. However, the tragedy has persisted since then and the Palestinians are expelled from any land on which they settle and are destined to encounter death, homelessness and arrest at any moment.

What is surprising is that the Balfour promise was not intended for the Jews alone but consisted in fact of two promises or of a two-part promise: The first a promise to the Jews to facilitate their ultimate hope of establishing a national homeland for the Jewish people and the second a promise by Britain to the Palestinians and the Arabs pledging that establishment of the Jewish homeland will not change or affect the civil and religious rights of the Muslim Arab Palestinians living on their land in Palestine. The first part has been implemented to the letter and Britain and the major powers have given even more than they had promised. As for the second part concerning the Arabs, it has been forgotten and nobody remembers it. This fact may be beneficial to those looking for the psychological reasons making the ordinary Arab citizens mistrustful of the promises given them and causing these citizens not to be very reassured by what the major powers tell them.

If we compared one date in Arab history, namely 2 November 1917, with another date, namely 6 October 1973, we would conclude that the future of the Arab area will be determined by its citizens if they are strong, if they speak as one, if they wrest the reins of initiative, if they impose the direction of their movement on the world, if they take hold of their own cause and if they refrain from surrendering it to others. But the future of this area will be determined outside the area and by other countries if its sons submit to internal division and disagreements and to loss of awareness.

The Balfour promise anniversary comes this year with an Egyptian movement to revive international interest in the Palestinian issue in its capacity as the key to peace and stability in the area. Rational appeals are issuing from Cairo to the Palestinians to overcome their differences that are draining their capabilities and scattering their forces so that they may deal with the state of division threatening their presence as a political force with its weight in the international balance, so that they may pay attention to the fragmentation snare laid for them and so that they may remember the lesson of 2 November which seemed to some at the time mere words from the British secretary of foreign affairs. But the words turned with the years into a bitter reality for which the Palestinians, as well as the Arabs, have paid a dear price in territories, in dignity, in blood and in the lives of children, women and old people driven by the fates from a refugee camp to a detention camp or vice versa. It is important that the Palestinians realize the importance of the historical moment in which the Arabs live at present--without eloquent speeches and without fiery poems--because if they fail to regain their awareness, then this failure would mean persistent movement on the same path which started on 2 November 1917, a long and seemingly endless path.

The 2 November anniversary also comes at a time when the Egyptian movement is proceeding in the direction of the world capitals considered to be the influential power keys. Cairo must receive the Arab support that enables it to move on in this direction. The fact is that for the Arab area to become stable and defused and for its peoples to coexist under real peace, some sort of justice must be first achieved in it by finding a solution to the Palestinian problem that satisfies the Palestinians because peace cannot be established between oppressor and oppressed or between killer and killed. With the intransigent Israeli position, the major power which created the tragedy must now do something to correct the consequences of the crime they committed. This appeal stems not only from moral and humanitarian motives but also from political motives because the interests of the major powers dictate that the fuse be removed from the area. This can be done only by pulling out the roots of Arab bitterness. The Arabs expect a Balfour-like promise to be issued to this effect or they have to do it themselves.

8494

CSO: 4504/79

LIBERAL PAPER ANALYZES WAFD, BROTHERHOOD RELATIONSHIP

Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic 8 Oct 84 p 2

[Article by Faruq 'Abd-al-Salam: "The Wafd and The Brotherhood"]

[Text] The articles published on these pages express the opinions of their authors--even if they conflict with our--in deference to the right of expression, a principle AL-AHRAR espouses.

The return of the Wafd represented the hopes and dreams of all the people, Wafdists and non-Wafdists alike. No one ever believed in the possibility of the Wafd returning one day, after a 30-year ban on its activities! The return of the Wafd meant the great departure from the dictatorship's trench and from the realm of the single totalitarian party. It meant relief for all and total liberation on the road of democracy, in truth and in reality. For so long as the government has permitted the return of the Wafd, the deep-rooted majority party of old and the one so feared by the authorities that they cancelled all other parties, it means, with all the more reason, allowing and approving the return of all the other currents, unless the regime has come to the realization that the Wafd is no longer the strongest opposition current it fears, or that the Wafd of today, in its imagination, can be tamed or allowed to return with [the government retaining] the ability, at the same time, to shackle and bind its movement and activities with the retained freedom-restricting abnormal and emergency laws.

The return of the Wafd meant much to the enlightened Islamic current in general and the Muslim Brotherhood in particular.

It means revival, a new life and a chance of a lifetime, just as it used to be in the days of the glorious struggle on the banks of the canal. The Muslim Brotherhood had three kinds of luck with the rulers of Egypt:

The [first] kind of ruler who subjected them to the worst kinds of murder, vagrancy, imprisonment and methods of torture unheard of even in the Middle Ages. A case in point is what they experienced under 'Abd-al-Nasir and Ibrahim 'Abd-al-Hadi.

The second kind of ruler merely banned their activities.

The third kind of ruler set them free and granted them legitimacy. The Wafd is, in the full sense of the word, a democratic party that does not manipulate or deceive when raising the slogan of democracy. More importantly, he gave them the chance to fight for the sake of God. The Wafd is a national party and no amount of arrogance can entertain any doubts about its patriotic decisions or its leaders' patriotism. It was enough for the Brotherhood that the Wafd did not make peace with the enemy, any enemy. It declared its resistance and did not prevent them from taking off toward the line of fire.

That is why the return of the Wafd meant so much to the Brotherhood. The Muslim brother in Egypt today is burning from inside and finds himself shackled and restricted while the enemy is violating his holy places in Jerusalem. Some eccentrics are openly threatening to storm al-Aqsa Mosque.

The Muslim brother in Egypt today is burning from inside, hearing and seeing those who are destroying and violating his country's territory in Taba. He is heartsick, watching his brothers in God in Palestine and Lebanon falling by the hundreds on the field of honor while fighting the army with unparalleled courage.

Egypt's youth on the corners and in the streets are only interested in trite talk about soccer and trashy video movies.

To the Brotherhood, the return of the Wafd meant the unleashing of latent energies, the revival of sleeping dreams and the return of the days in which Egypt can witness glorious Wafd positions and resolutions. Egypt can once again see a firm foreign minister who does not bend or haggle over what is right and does not budge from his position, while the whole population is repeating after him "Arms, O Salah" [al-Silah ya Salah]. Egypt can see an interior minister who believes in resistance until death for the sake of truth, regardless of the difference in instruments, equipment and number. A minister who, at his own risk, ordered a handful of soldiers in Isma'iliyah to resist the forces of Great Britain, regardless of the consequences.

The return of the Wafd means many hopes and dreams for everyone in general and the Brotherhood in particular. But a year has already passed and the days as usual pass with oppressive and melancholy monotony. The political street in Egypt is still as it used to be, a dead political street.

It is a generally accepted truth that what cannot be fully attained cannot be fully relinquished. But for how long? For how long, when a whole year has passed and the Wafd is still but a weekly newspaper just like the other minority parties. It used to be known in the past that one family or one individual from the Wafd could publish a daily newspaper to exceed all other newspapers in circulation and popularity.

--Will the Wafd's mission end at asking questions, putting forth proposals and exposing digressions, a mission that has been performed by the other opposition parties?

--And just like the other parties, how long will the Wafd remain silent about the emergency and other abnormal laws? How long will it remain reticent about the Camp David Accords?

With regard to the Brotherhood, will the Wafd's role end at enabling eight Brotherhood members to go to the People's Assembly? And is the Wafd a party that is ready to enter the arena without the Brotherhood, just like the other parties before that? The Brotherhood thought and believed that the Wafd, with a history deeply rooted in democracy, wishes its brother what it wishes for itself. Therefore, it should have made itself, after its return, the advocate for the return of the Brotherhood.

The Brotherhood seems to be saying to the New Wafd: "O Wafdists, do something and say something and remember your brother who has been at the bottom of the pit for 30 years. Were it not for fear of more alienation, he would have told you what Joseph told his friend who he thought was saved: "and of the two, to that one whom he considered about to be saved he said; 'Mention me to thy lord,' but Satan made him forget to mention him to the lord and he (Joseph) lingered in prison for a few more years."

12502

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IBRAHIM SHUKRI REVIEWS HIS CONTACTS AT UNITED NATIONS

Cairo AL-SHA'B in Arabic 16 Oct 84 p 3

[Interview with Ibrahim Shukri, Socialist Labor Party chairman, by Majdi Ahmad Husayn and Majdi al-Sayyid: "I Did Not Withdraw When Israel's Address Was Delivered Because I Was Not in Hall"; in Cairo, date not specified]

[Text] AL-SHA'B had to meet Ibrahim Shukri, the Labor Party chairman, immediately upon his return from the United States after participating in the Egyptian delegation to the 39th annual meeting of the U.N. General Assembly in order that we may know his evaluation, in order that the citizens and the people concerned with political affairs may find out the extent of the success of forming the Egyptian delegation with the participation of the Egyptian opposition for the first time since the start of the experiment of multiple parties, in order that we may answer implicitly a number of questions raised on the occasion of this [un]precedented step and in order that the people may be familiarized with a new step within the framework of the popular diplomacy followed by the Labor Party in the interest of Egypt and even within the framework of the pan-Arab and Islamic action in which the party believes, realizing, as Chairman Ibrahim Shukri said, that "the peoples determine their future with the effort they exert to support their causes. The international conferences and meetings are no more than an assisting factor in this regard." This is how the interview began:

[Question] Your trip to the United Nations within the Egyptian delegation came at a time when the country was being faced with important and delicate internal issues. Did your approval to go on the trip come as a result of motives and reasons imposed by the political importance of current internal conditions?

[Answer] I must stress that regardless of how important the international meetings are at their various levels and in the different organizations, it will always be that the future of the issues concerning a certain country or people or a group of peoples is determined first by the efforts exerted by the people themselves in their country. These international conferences will

remain to a large degree an assisting factor in the success of a certain issue. The evidence to this is the Palestinian issue, which has come to be called the "Middle East issue." Despite the numerous resolutions made in the international organizations in favor of the issue, what has determined the bitter reality in which this issue lives is what Israel is doing in the Palestinian territories, rather in all the Arab territories and even by invading the Arab countries and going to the extent of occupying the capital of one of the Arab countries. However, there can be no comparison between my participation in the important issues that have developed and that are developing in Egypt and my participation in this [U.N.] session at this date. However, this issue has been governed by a number of elements, including the fact that the date of the session is set and that this initiative [to include opposition members in the Egyptian delegation] is considered a positive step in terms of acknowledging the parties' role in shouldering responsibilities within the framework of the system which is founded on multiple parties. By responding to the invitation to go, I sought to stress my approval of this tendency which underlines traditions that we must entrench so as to bolster the concept of the importance and advantage of the multiplicity of parties and of democracy. I hope that this initiative will continue and will be established as a tradition so that the parties may contribute in an effective manner based on studies and on the sense of responsibility. As for the internal issues, I was careful to express my opinion on the most important issues I had expected to be discussed in this period, namely the subsidy issue and the issue of enforcement of the emergency law.

Regarding the first issue, I pointed out in the article I wrote on the eve of my departure that the topic of raising the price of the popular loaf of bread must be omitted from the subsidy issue and I warned against this tendency. I even appealed to Mubarak to reconsider the decision that had already been made by the minister of supply raising the price of bread. I pointed out objectively the burdens with which the poor Egyptian family with a large number of members will be saddled--the family to whom the subsidy must be channelled primarily. As for the subsidy issue as a whole, the party is preparing a study on this issue and will present it to the government.

I Declared My Rejection of Emergency Law

As for the emergency law, I have declared my rejection because the reasons stated in the constitution defining clearly the cases in which the emergency law must be enforced are not present in our current conditions.

I refuse to have my country being described as a country which has been living under emergency law for the 4th or 5th year. The meaning of a state of emergency is well known to the entire world. The state of emergency means one of two possibilities: The government is not content with the existing ordinary and special laws and wants to utilize the powers of the emergency law, finding that it cannot continue to work except under the canopy of this law. This gives the impression that it is a government that does not actually enjoy real popular support.

Continuation of the emergency law may also mean that the people agree to live constantly under the canopy of the provisions of this law which deny the citizens many guarantees available for the liberties under the constitution and the law. I refuse to see the Egyptian people become one of the peoples who agree to concede the individual rights stipulated in the constitution and the rights contained in the U.N. human rights charter.

The Egyptian people have struggled to liberate their country from foreign aggression in order that they may ultimately live freely and honorably on their land. If the continued enforcement of the emergency law comes on a resolution by a majority of the People's Assembly members who are supposed to represent the people, this fact does not change the reality of the situation because diminished freedom is rejected under all conditions. Moreover, my confidence that my colleagues in the People's Assembly and the Wafd's opposition would express their opinion and the opinion I have expressed regarding full rejection of the extended enactment of the emergency law and the nature of the distribution of the roles made me agree to go with the delegation representing Egypt in the U.N. session.

Parties' Participation Is Positive Step

[Question] Have the positive points which you had expected of participation in the Egyptian delegation been achieved, especially since it had been expected that problems might develop within the Egyptian delegation due to the presence of difference in viewpoints on foreign policy affairs?

[Answer] Generally, I can say that the participation in this session and the special efforts I exerted in my meetings with U.S. administration officials and congressmen have produced a result which I consider positive and which may constitute in the future a beginning for roles whose importance will grow gradually and constantly. The broad lines of the address delivered by the Egyptian minister of foreign affairs were in agreement with the policies advocated by the Egyptian parties calling for adherence to nonalignment and underlining Egypt's Arab and African role and Egypt's concern for the Palestinian issue and for the Israeli usurper's withdrawal from Arab territories and from Jerusalem. The address also underlined Egypt's adherence to the democratic course.

There is no doubt that the emphasis on this tendency in the biggest international gathering commits the Egyptian government and President Mubarak to make the words compatible with sound democratic practices. This issue is, naturally, the subject of discussion in Egypt, its solution is in the hands of the Egyptian people and it will not be solved in any international gathering. I had anticipated a position which would seem a matter of disagreement in opinion between those representing the government and myself, namely my withdrawing from the hall when the representative of Israel was to begin delivering his address. But the fates took care of the situation because an arrangement had been made for Wednesday, 3 October, specifically, for the Middle East Committee members of the U.S. Congress to meet with the members of the Egyptian People's Assembly participating in the delegation. This day offered about the only chance for meeting with the U.S. congressmen before the weekend recess after which they were to go to their districts to take part in the final phases of the election campaign. Thus, none of the Egyptian People's Assembly members participating in the delegation attended [the U.N. session] when Israel delivered its address.

However, on the previous day I was sitting with another member of the Egyptian delegation following the addresses of various countries. When the Iranian representative delivered his address, it contained harsh words denouncing the position of Egypt's former ruler and his regime (according to the Iranian representative's words) toward the Palestinian cause. The Iranian representative went on almost to condemn current positions on the issue that may be reflected on Egypt and a number of other Arab countries. At that point I heard the other delegation member say that he was withdrawing, and he did so. But I stayed to hear the rest of the address because that address was not printed and distributed in advance. Thus, we may have acted differently but ultimately, we must all work for Egypt and its interests. Each of us may have his view, approach and method. I was careful to listen to the speeches of all the Arab representatives in particular and to the speeches of the countries with weight and influence on the world policies generally.

The party will prepare a study on the most important tendencies reflected in the speeches of the international blocs and a detailed study on the speeches of the representatives of the Arab countries.

The participation of opposition members in the delegation has an indubitable importance and advantage in explaining viewpoints to U.S. officials, members of Congress, organizations concerned with Middle Eastern studies and specialized research centers that help shape U.S. decision-making. We have explained clearly what we consider the right solutions that lead to stability and comprehensive peace in the area. Our opinions, heard from representatives of the Egyptian people, may be somewhat different from the opinions these circles are accustomed to hearing from the ruling party's representatives.

I have emphasized our viewpoint which they neglect, not out of ignorance but out of disregard, with the Zionist influence in the United States contributing to this disregard. This viewpoint is that there can be only one solution, namely evacuation from the usurped Arab territories and giving the Palestinian people their right to self-determination and to living on their land.

Contacts Have Produced Important Results

[Question] We want to ask specifically about the role you have played in the contacts with Arab, Islamic or African countries?

[Answer] There is no doubt that this was one of the objectives I had sought to achieve as much as possible in this international gathering. It was a good opportunity to contact most of the Arab delegates and these contacts have undoubtedly produced results that help Egypt perform its sound role as a partner with all the Arabs in solving their problems and also help Egypt perform its role in the Islamic and African world.

[Question] Haven't these contacts caused you some sort of embarrassment with the Egyptian minister of foreign affairs and the official policy he represents and did this lead to imposing any restrictions on your movement?

[Answer] I want to stress that the minister of foreign affairs showed full understanding of what popular diplomacy could accomplish. As long as there is understanding of the true nature of the issues with which we are dealing and

regardless of the differences which emerged as a result of some steps taken by Egypt or by the Arab countries during al-Sadat's administration, the fundamental strategic goal for which the Arab and Islamic nation should continue to be eager is how ultimately to solve its problems, led by the Palestinian issue and the liberation of Jerusalem. I will go even further and say that there was constant communication and coordination on all the contacts that have taken place. The minister of foreign affairs was careful to acquaint us immediately with his various meetings, and he did actually meet most of the representatives of the Arab countries and the ministers and representatives of the major powers. It may not be beneficial to detail all the contacts that have taken place to serve the desired goal of uniting the word of the Arabs and of the Islamic world and to improve the position insofar as the African situation is concerned.

[Question] What, in your opinion, are the most important resolutions taken by this session of the UN General Assembly?

[Answer] The fact is that the UN General Assembly's annual sessions are designed in the first weeks for what is called the general discussion, i.e., the speeches of the UN members. No set period of time is allocated for the speeches. Then follows the turn of making resolutions on the most important issues presented after these issues are discussed in the special committees. Therefore, during our presence, no resolutions were made, except for one resolution for which the countries presenting this resolution used a provision in the regulations permitting the urgent issuance of a resolution. This resolution was presented by the African group to discuss urgently a decision to condemn South Africa's racist conduct on the Namibia issue. The General Assembly responded to the request and a resolution was issued with an overwhelming majority and with no objections.

[Question] If we exclude the resolutions, what, in your opinion, are the most important events of this session?

[Answer] The most important speeches delivered included President Reagan's speech and the speech delivered by Gromyko, the Soviet minister of foreign affairs. The fact that Zambia's representative chaired this session has special significance and reflects the appreciation of the UN members. We must also note that Egypt took part in the coordination meeting of the Islamic countries participating in the session and the [Egyptian] minister of foreign affairs delivered a speech to this meeting which was chaired by the representative of Bangladesh. The foreign minister's speech cited numerous Koran verses. It is worth noting that an argument ensued between Iran's representative and Egypt's representatives to the meeting over the meaning of certain Koran verses and over what the verses are that must be cited to best indicate the sound position vis-a-vis current events, whether those connected with the Iraq-Iran war or with the Palestinian issue.

Special Appreciation for Egypt

Egypt also chaired the meetings of the group known as the Group of 77 which now includes 126 countries. This is a mark of special appreciation for Egypt, considering that there was almost complete consensus on this selection. It is

to be noted in this regard that Iran's delegate approved, rather demanded, that Egypt's chairmanship of the group be extended until 1986. The foreign minister also delivered a speech to the nonaligned group which was received with special appreciation.

Thus, it can be stressed that Egypt is regaining gradually its activity and its position which is compatible with its real role. However, this [restoration] requires constant effort and ceaseless progress in order for the role to be truly effective and influential in solving the currently existing problems. In my assessment, this begins with re-establishing a clear and frank united Arab position toward the Arab and Islamic nation's causes.

Restoration of Jordanian-Egyptian Relations Has Been Most Important Event

[Question] What are the issues in which you felt the delegates and the U.S. circles that you contacted were interested?

[Answer] The restoration of normal Jordanian-Egyptian relations was the subject of comment by numerous Arab and African delegations. The overwhelming majority of the Arab countries showed an understanding that this step brings conditions closer to the projected solutions and initiatives, even though some Arab delegations expressed the observation that this step would have been more beneficial if it were taken after an Arab summit. As for the U.S. [Congress] members and institutions, their enquiries on this particular point focused on what we expect after this step and on what countries may follow Jordan's step. There also were questions on the events which took place in Kafr al-Dawwar, considering that many more details have been provided by the foreign press and broadcasting stations than by the national press.

There were also questions on our assessments of the new Israeli cabinet's tendencies on solving Arab-Israeli differences, to put it in their words. We also discussed U.S. aid to Egypt. There were even questions on the verdicts issued in the Jihad case and on whether these verdicts have a special significance and reflect certain tendencies. It is natural that the answers to many of these questions by the delegation members were not similar, even though the answers in their entirety provided a real picture of the multiplicity of opinions among our different parties.

The most important questions raised by many dealt with what they call terrorism. It was evident that the blowing up of the U.S. Embassy [in Beirut] played a role in the election battle between Reagan and his rival. As for my impressions of these meetings, they can be discussed in another interview.

[Question] And what are your impressions of the tendencies of U.S. thinking in light of the successive events in our area?

[Answer] Generally, I can say that these contacts took place at a time that was not the ideal time for such contacts because all in the United States were preoccupied with the election campaign that has reached its peak in recent weeks, considering that everything could be viewed through the perspective of the campaign and of the impact of whatever may be said on the outcome of the campaign.

But it is indubitable that I can stress here that the meetings were beneficial to us, even though they stressed concepts of which we had been aware in advance, namely that no issue can be solved by anybody other than the people concerned. Moreover, the Zionist influence in U.S. society has reached its peak in all circles, be they administration, congressional, Senate or press circles. This situation deserves that efforts be made to further explain the Arab causes to the American people.

Impact of Jewish Lobby in Oversetting Facts

Insofar as the U.S. press is concerned, it suffices to note that even though the Egyptian foreign minister's speech [to the United Nations] pointed out the real and sound positions of Egyptian foreign policy and the issues raised in the arena, led by the Palestinian issue and by Israel's actions that obstruct the peace process, the main bannerline in the most important U.S. papers said that the Egyptian foreign minister had praised and thanked Israel's government. Those papers relied on a single sentence in the minister's speech saying that Egypt welcomes the statement of the new Israeli cabinet on withdrawal from Lebanon. Thus, this press is capable of oversetting all the facts and of portraying them from the viewpoint of Israel and of the Zionist lobby that controls the U.S. media.

[Question] Do you expect diplomatic relations to be resumed with Arab countries other than Jordan?

[Answer] I expect that more normal relations will be restored by more than one Arab country after the convocation of an Arab summit in the near future.

[Question] What is your comment on the resumption of Egyptian-Jordanian relations?

[Answer] Our viewpoint always emanates from our adherence to the unity of the Arab peoples and we welcome any step pertaining to coordination, cooperation or integration, not to mention unity, regardless of whatever is said about the subjective motives of one of the parties involved. But we always warn against the creation of axes and I do not believe that resoration of diplomatic relations between Egypt and Jordan constitutes an axis against anybody as much as it serves the interest of the Arab people as a whole and the Arab people of Jordan and Egypt in particular. Thus, I welcome the restoration of these relations. Moreover, the Labor Party's representative in the People's Assembly reflected the party viewpoint when he objected to Egypt's withdrawal from the Union of Arab Republics, even though we acknowledge that this federation represents a mere superficiality. However, it was in our view a symbol of aspirations which we hope will be achieved in form and content in the future.

The interview had to be stopped so that we could submit it to the printing presses on time. But we will continue the interview in the next edition so that the party chairman may review with us his positions on the successive and serious events that have taken place in the country in the past few days during his presence at the United Nations.

OPPOSITION VIEWS WAGE, PRICE ISSUES

Cairo AL-AHRAR in Arabic 8 Oct 84 p 1

[Article by Mustafa Kamil Murad: "Wages and Prices"]

[Text] The Liberal Party sees a need for a re-examination of the wage and price structure in keeping with the inflation rates and the cost of living.

The wage is considered a return for work. It is the most important as well as the most effective element of production with respect to various economic activities.

Hence, the wage structure is the most important element that influences production costs and prices simultaneously. Therefore, the Socialist Liberal Party believes that labor's share of the value added to the gross national product [GNP] must not be less than 50 percent.

The Liberal Party believes in a dynamic economy that revises the wage and price structures every year to tie them to production and to keep up roughly with the annual rates of inflation that affect the cost of living as well as the people's state of mind, that of the limited-income government and public sector employees in particular. This is keeping in mind that the great majority of them do not make enough to meet the bare necessities of life and that the employee who cannot find enough to live on in most cases turns into a tool of resentment, idleness and corruption that upsets drastically the pillars of production and services. It is a well-known fact that the limited-income government and public sector employees represent the production nerve of industry and services in the country.

Therefore, the Socialist Liberal Party believes that the wage structure must be revised annually and adjusted upward to keep up with inflation rates and higher costs of goods and services. It also believes that labor classification and training in the use of modern production tools is a necessary and vital matter that deserves the cooperation of the government, the public and cooperative sectors and the labor and professional unions.

The Socialist Liberal Party likewise sees a need for establishing a minimum wage to be adjusted annually in proportion to the cost of living, while working towards narrowing the gap between the minimum and maximum wage.

ROLE OF SOCIALIST PROSECUTOR EXAMINED

Cairo AKHBAR AL-YAWM in Arabic 20 Oct 84 p 2

[Editorial by Ibrahim Sa'dah: "Crime Does Not Die"]

[Text] Counselor 'Abd-al-Qadir Ahmad 'Ali, the socialist public prosecutor, has proven that he is worthy of the important position he holds and of the enormous responsibility he shoulders. Since assuming the chairmanship of this agency, he has been pursuing corruption and corrupters everywhere and seizing big and small without any discrimination and without any favors. His first and foremost cause is the public interest and the recouping of public monies from those who had imagined that they could steal safely and securely.

Counselor 'Abd-al-Qadir Ahmad 'Ali does not sit in his office for a case to be brought to him by one agency or another or for a citizen's report to be brought to him by mail. We have been him looking for delinquency everywhere and ordering that such delinquency be investigated with utter neutrality, objectivity and integrity. He also keeps up with the cases of delinquency and corruption published in the press and proceeds to investigate them without any reluctance and regardless of the weight and influence of the delinquent and of those involved.

When AKHBAR AL-YAWM began to publish its series of investigative reports on the violations and delinquencies committed in encroachment on the Nile bank lands, the socialist public prosecutor's office was the first to show interest in those reports, to follow up on them and to decide to investigate them. It is certain that the public socialist prosecutor's office will uncover much more stunning facts in this case than AKHBAR AL-YAWM has been able to uncover and to highlight. What AKHBAR AL-YAWM has published in the past few weeks represents no more than a drop in an ocean--a thundering ocean of violations, delinquencies, crimes and thefts engulfed in a curtain of secrecy in hiding places in the Ministry of Irrigation and in the agrarian reform offices. There are strict orders to prevent the press from becoming familiarized with any paper concerning the river bank lands. There have been harsh warnings to every employee rumored to have contacts with the press, cooperating with it or supplying it with information through which this press may get to the higherups who planned and engaged in these delinquencies and who, along with their family members, friends, supporters and acquaintances, benefited from them!

It is fortunate that the law gives the socialist public prosecutor's office the right to familiarize itself with all secrets and to force those hiding secrets to reveal them, to submit documents pertaining to them and to explain what is hidden in them. When the socialist public prosecutor begins to investigate the case of seizure of the Nile bank lands, no official, regardless of his name or position, will dare hide a delinquent or render favors to any present or former official so that he personally may not become subject to punishment by the law.

How I wish that the socialist public prosecutor's office will not stop in its expected investigations at the current violations and delinquencies but will extend these investigations to a long number of years past. The encroachment on these lands is not today's crime or a crime of the immediate past. Rather, it is a crime that dates back to dozens of years ago, beginning with the start of the agrarian reform, the confiscation of land ownership and the redistribution of the lands to new owners. This fact dictates that the socialist public prosecutor open this secret file of the most heinous and ugliest crimes committed against the agrarian reform law and against public property and public monies.

When this happens, the corruption and involvement of big names and their seizure of vast areas of state-owned lands without any right will be exposed. We will hear about major agricultural leaders who imagined that the agrarian reform law was issued to wrench agricultural ownership from the feudalists and the people's enemies, as they used to call the big landowners, so that these leaders, their brothers, children, cousins, servants and retinues may seize them. We will also hear about those who used to own nothing and who, thanks to their cheating ability, now possess vast areas of cultivable lands as a result of deception, imaginary auctions and forgery of official papers.

When all these crimes are exposed, public opinion will not be surprised or amazed by them. Many are those who know these facts and others and many are those who were subjected to questioning in the past and then, suddenly, instructions were issued to suspend their investigation, thus allowing those questioned to get out of their predicament the way a hair is pulled out of the dough!

Crime does not pay, as they say. But a crime does not die either and must never [be allowed to] die.

8484

CSO: 4504/91

WAFD DISMISSAL OF YASIN SIRAJ-AL-DIN ANALYZED

Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 24 Oct 84 p 3

[Editorial by Jalal-al-Din al-Hamamsi: "Some Merits, Flaws of Democratic Discipline"]

[Text] The measure taken by the Wafd Party dismissing one of its members, a member representing it in the People's Assembly, might be a purely internal matter which should not be subject to comment. However, the measure does reveal some forms and manifestations of democratic discipline that have been absent from our present generation, which has lived in democratic darkness for a long time.

The decision taken by the Wafd Party to dismiss the brother of the party chairman is due to two things:

First, in a democratic act on its part--an act which we have all welcomed--the government selected some members of the opposition parties to join Egypt's delegation to the U.N. General Assembly. But in doing so, the government forgot something which made the act democratically incomplete. It did not ask the parties to present to it a list of those they wish to nominate for this mission so that the government may select from the list those it deems fit to select.

Second, the government also issued a decision appointing a number of members of the opposition parties to the Nile Valley Parliament during the parliament's latest meeting. Here too, the government committed the same mistake by failing to consult with these parties on which of their members should be appointed. At this point, the Wafd Party decided that the matter constitutes a deviation from democratic discipline and issued a resolution instructing its selected members to refrain from attending the parliament's sessions. Two members submitted to the resolution but the brother of the party chairman proceeded to attend the session, thus swerving from partisan discipline, from which emanates democratic discipline. Consequently, the party's Higher Committee proceeded to issue its dismissal decision.

This act by the party does not mean an attack on the government's "goodwill" in dealing with the opposition. Rather, it means, I would like to think, a call for establishing democratic discipline in the future in the

relationship between the government and the party on the one hand and a call for partisan abidance which dictates that the members submit to the opinion of the majority of the committee members who control the management of the party's affairs on the other hand. The immediate reaction of the contravening member was supposed to be either resignation from the party or the actual acceptance and implementation of the party decisions. This is the effective partisan interaction which is accepted, rather acknowledged, by democracy in all countries of the world. Many are the groups that have broken away from their parties because of disagreement with the majority opinion and have chosen a different political path.

What is important is that all the parties involved learn from this incident so that the government may carry on with mobilizing all the political forces for the national positions that dictate that all partisan disagreements be forgotten, provided that the government give weight and consideration to the parties' opinions as to those whom it selects for the national mobilization. The parties must also proceed to establish discipline within their positions so that disregard for the parties may not become a subject for the people's jokes.

This democratic interaction has stirred, by a small degree, the people's faith that we are, for example, moving forward with democratic action of a new kind, 'God willing,' we should say.

8494

CSO: 4504/91

MODERN URBAN CONDITIONS BEMOANED

Cairo AL-AKHBAR in Arabic 19 Oct 84 p 12

[Editorial by Mustafa Amin: "An Idea"]

[Text] We are more fortunate than our children and our children are more fortunate than our grandchildren and it must be that the ancient Egyptians were happier than all of us. At least they did not have a population problem. Not every citizen was required to build a pyramid and it was enough for a citizen to get a few stones and build a room wherever he wanted, without a license or permit and without having to go through seven dizzying circles before he could get a permit to enter paradise! The ancient Egyptian did not have to put up with the annoyance of the neighbor's radio and television and did not have to spend his day and night listening to the pounding sounds of those living above him, as if they are pounding meat, drilling holes in the wall or driving nails into the wall. The ancient Egyptians did not have the problem of lifts coming to a sudden stop, with the lift company hearing them only after 7 days of appeals for help. They did not have power outages because they had not yet invented electricity. God thus spared them the catastrophe of the Electricity Authority's bill. They did not have newspapers making their life miserable with promises that go unfulfilled and with projects that never end. The rulers wrote whatever they wished on papyrus paper and buried those papers in the sand so that nobody could read them before the passage of a thousand years. When a thousand years pass on a government mistake, the mistake diminishes in size and significance. Instead of the tragedy being of the dimensions of the Cairo Plaza building it becomes the size of a pinhead.

Whoever studies the remains of the ancient Egyptians carefully will notice that the Egyptian woman did not go to excesses in buying dresses. Even Queen Cleopatra kept one dress throughout dozens of years. Moreover, she did not cost her husband, Ptolemy, the expenses of a daily visit to the hair dresser but had her coiffure once every 2 years!

The ancient Egyptians did not experience the overcrowding that is almost stifling us nowadays. (Habi), the minister of interior in the reign of King Thutmose II, was not compelled to leave his office and stand in the streets to direct traffic and appeal to the people for discipline. Perhaps the secret in this is that there were no streets at the time of the ancient Egyptians. When we invented streets, we invented with them overcrowding, traffic jams and traffic tickets and fines.

The costs of doctors and hospitals were not as expensive as they are at present. A surgery did not cost much. There was no anaesthesia and no anaesthesiological equipment. At the time, they brought the patient and the head orderly would proceed and hit him with a (club) on the head. The patient thus lost consciousness immediately and the doctor would proceed to open up his belly and perform the surgery. The patient either regained consciousness after the surgery was completed or he departed to his god's mercy!

Life was simple, It is now getting more complex by the day. The more civilization and culture advance, the higher the costs and the prices rise and the heavier the burdens of life become. May Khufu, Khafre and Menkaure [Egyptian pharaohs] rest in peace.

8494

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STRUCTURAL CHANGES, NEW TURBINES AT HIGH DAM PLANNED

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 77, 29 Sep 84 pp 57-58

/Article by Ihsan Bakr: "Emergency American Surgery on the High Dam"/

/Text/ The political-technological struggle between East and West has broken out anew over the turbines of the High Dam. The giant project constructed by Soviet and Egyptian specialists in the early 1960's now faces a technological struggle to repair cracks that have developed in the turbines. This struggle is being waged simultaneously by French, Soviet and American experts, while in another task the Yugoslavs are attempting to remedy some cracks in rock inclines. In addition, Egypt has authorized funds for scientific studies to protect the High Dam from Red Sea earthquakes.

The upgrade of the High Dam turbines was inevitable. They have operated continuously for 17 years, producing some 8 billion kilowatt hours of electricity per year. The design lifetime of the turbines has almost expired. Now they are destined for a new life of power generation and an increase in output for each of the 12 turbines from 175 to 187.5 megawatts, bringing the total generating capacity of the station from 2,100 to approximately 2,250 megawatts. The United States will finance the process of upgrading the High Dam turbines with a loan of \$100 million.

The High Dam as an electricity generating station was built by the Soviet Union in the early 1960's. It is an integrated station with a rate capacity of 2,100 megawatts. The station has 12 turbines with a rating of 175 megawatts each. The Soviet Union helped Egypt build the High Dam and connect the generating station to the electricity distribution grid by means of a 500 kilovolt high-voltage line covering some 1,000 km between Aswan and Cairo.

Egyptian specialists first noticed hairline cracks in some turbines in the early 1970's. The Soviet Union helped to weld these cracks, but they continued to worsen. The solution was to continue welding but to use a more advanced welding technology. To accomplish this, the Soviet Union sent groups of Soviet specialists 3 years ago to weld two of the turbines. In addition French specialists performed welding on four turbines and Egyptian specialists performed welding on two other turbines using the French welding technique. Because of continued welding and maintenance, the High Dam station could not operate at full capacity. Due to fears of continued crack development, and in order to restore the station

to full capacity in order to utilize all 55.5 billion cubic meters of water available to generate power, Egypt accepted an American bid to change the "rotating parts"--namely, the rotors--in the High Dam turbines rather than carrying out an overhaul.

The upgrading operation is being funded by an American grant of \$100 million, including \$85 million for the importation of the turbine rotors and \$15 million for the development of power distribution equipment. The upgrade operation will last approximately 6 years, with two turbines to be installed every 2 years from next year through 1991.

Thus, the High Dam has concluded its Soviet design lifetime and has begun a new American design lifetime of 25 more years. The rotating part of the giant turbine, weighing approximately 132 tons, will be manufactured and installed by the American party. However, the rest of the parts of the turbine will remain Soviet in origin.

The High Dam project was designed under the leadership of the famous Soviet expert Nikolay Marashukh, and more than 35,000 Egyptian workers participated in its construction. The turbines of the High Dam were designed in the 1960's according to the best available expertise and technology at the time. However, turbine specifications have changed as the technology of turbine manufacture has developed. International companies now arrive at the design of turbines through the use of computers, and turbines can now be turned with a high degree of accuracy in which the errors of traditional engineering measurement are reduced to almost nothing. Moreover, steel ingots now available can resist higher levels of stress and produce more electricity for a given quantity of flowing water, resulting in a total increase in the generating capacity of the station of five to eight percent.

Two of the rotating parts for the 12 turbines of the High Dam are already being manufactured in the United States and will arrive at the port of Alexandria during the next 2 months. The parts will be transported to Aswan on the Nile River because of their weight, which is too great for ground transportation. This is the same means of transportation employed to transport the original turbines for the High Dam during the 1960's.

In another confrontation, this one with earthquakes, experts confirmed the need to perform emergency surgery on the High Dam. On 14 November 1981, the High Dam experienced an earthquake which registered 5.8 units on the international scale. Despite the fact that such an earthquake should not have a major effect on the load on the body of the High Dam, Egypt felt that safety factors had to be increased. Therefore, a committee was formed with the ministers of scientific research, electricity, irrigation, reconstruction, and industry along with scientists, experts, and university professors to assess the magnitude of the risks threatening the High Dam.

The higher Egyptian committee initiated a complete inspection of all components of the structure of the High Dam, feeling that any problem that affects the dam is a direct threat and danger to all of Egypt. The activities and inspections of the scientific committees revealed that the eastern slope of the High Dam's rear channel was in a state of collapse which would be expected in the event of any strong tremor or due to eroding meteorological factors.

The decision was made that an emergency engineering operation was necessary for the eastern side of the structure of the High Dam. The cost of this operation is 16 million pounds.

The surgical operation was opened to competitive international bids and the project was awarded to an Egyptian company and a Yugoslavian company. These companies conducted geological and scientific studies covering deep earth strata, river currents, and the examination of the body of the High Dam itself through television photography and infrared inspection.

It was revealed that some 150,000 cubic meters of rock along the length of the eastern slope of the body of the dam was liable to collapse at any moment and for any reason.

The Egyptian and Yugoslavian experts began a race against time to inspect the eastern slope of the rear channel. This channel is 282 meters in length, 278.5 meters wide, 85.5 meters high, and 89 meters deep.

In order to restore the slope of the rear channel to the point of safety, 250,000 cubic meters of rock that make up this slope must be raised and the angle of inclination of the slope must be decreased from 85 degrees to 42 degrees.

The objective of the emergency surgery on the High Dam was to avert the danger to the body of the dam. The cracks in the rear channel and the disintegration of rock which is subject to collapse would affect the entrance to the channel, blocking it and preventing the water from reaching all of Egypt. In fact, rocks blocking the entrance to the channel would put pressure on the body of the dam and on the giant generating station.

The experts indicate that earthquakes are not the main cause of the cracks that began simultaneously with the hairline cracks in the turbines in 1971. While this was a reassuring situation, the earthquakes hastened the development of the evident cracks and accelerated the approach to the danger point.

The experts attribute the cracks around the High Dam to changes produced by the waters of Lake Nasir in the deep strata of the earth. However, detailed observation has confirmed that the earthquakes originate outside the area and their center is located in the Red Sea in the old earthquake belt.

Thus, the Egyptian High Dam faces cracks from natural earthquakes, technological struggles, and political fluctuations now in the 1980's as it did in the 1960's. In addition, it faces attempts by some old political forces to settle their accounts with the 23 July Revolution by focusing attention on the High Dam as a failed project that has harmed Egypt and the fertility of Egyptian land.

8591

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EGYPT

DIMENSIONS OF TRAFFIC PROBLEM EXPLORED

London AL-AHRAM: AL-TAB'AH AL-DUWALIYAH in Arabic 24 Oct 84 p 7

[Editorial by Salah Muntasir: "Traffic Future"]

[Text] Japan produces more than 10 million cars annually. Yet, any Japanese living in Tokyo cannot, by virtue of the rules and regulations in force, purchase or possess a car unless he proves that he has a vacant space for parking this car, either in a garage or in one of the streets where he lives and where it is permitted to park cars.

Japan is, as is well known, a free country and the individual's freedom there is revered. But when the individual's freedom clashes with the city planning and with the smooth flow of traffic, it turns from the individual's freedom to society's freedom. Despite this, traffic in Japan is extremely heavy. But they say it is an overcrowding in which cars move and even gather speed at times. But if every citizen were allowed to buy any number of cars he wishes and considering that car prices are affordable to all and all cars are produced locally, then cars would not move in Japan but would be standing still. Moreover, a Japanese told me: "At least we are now aware of the dimensions of the overcrowding we have reached and we will not aggravate it. But if we release the freedom to buy cars, then who knows what will happen?"

This "who knows" applies to Cairo. The freedom to own cars is absolute and it represents to many the lifeboat with which the citizen protects himself from the humiliation, insults and immoral behavior to which he, his wife and his daughters are exposed on public transportation.

It is a difficult equation: Should we prohibit the purchase of new cars except under conditions similar to those established in Japan, for example, thus protecting Cairo from the severe future overcrowding catastrophe but saddling the public transportation system, with all its problems, with the burden or should we maintain the system in force which, if continued, would overwhelm anybody trying to visualize traffic in Cairo's streets in 5 years?

It is a problem by any yardstick. Those caught in this problem are the agencies of the Ministry of Interior which license nearly 50,000 new cars

annually at a time when they have to organize the flow of this sweeping river of cars and to secure for each of them a lane in which to move in narrow and stifling streets that cannot accomodate or absorb them.

Therefore, it has not been surprising to me to hear Ahmad Rushdi, the minister of interior, speak to his top aides about the responsibility of traffic control and tell them explicitly that their task is not just to pass one thread through the needle's eye but to achieve the impossible and pass two threads together.

But the dimensions of the problem are still unknown and it would not be surprising in the near future if endeavors are made to pass three or four threads through a needle's eye that can hardly accomodate a single thread!

8494

CSO: 4504/79

HEAD OF RELIGIOUS TRUSTS DISCUSSES IMPACT OF ISLAMIC LAW

London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT 26, 27, 28 Oct 84

[Interview with Dr Yusuf Khalifah Abu-Bakr, chairman of Supreme Council for Religious Affairs and Trusts, by 'Adil al-Salahi: "Dr Yusuf Khalifah Abu Bakr: The Effects of Banning Alcohol Are Noticeable in All Aspects of Sudanese Society"]

[26 Oct 84 p 10]

[Text] During my visit to the Sudan I had numerous meetings with Dr Yusuf Khalifah Abu Bakr, chairman of the Supreme Council for Religious Affairs and Trusts. The ties between us had grown strong in the days he was preparing his thesis on Koranic vocalization, in which he received the doctorate from Manchester University.

In the days of the first international conference on the application of Islamic law in the Sudan, Dr Yusuf Khalifah was to be found everywhere, taking part in symposia, supervising the organization, receiving the guests of the Sudan and being concerned about their comfort, as he is concerned that all of them realize the greatest benefit from their visit to the Sudan in their area of specialization.

Then, when the conference ended, he received everyone from their group who had a cause or an issue in his office, bade them farewell at the airport and made sure that they were receiving suitable attention.

In his office, which lacks any of the manifestations of luxury well known among the offices of ministers, I had this professional interview with Dr Yusuf al-Khalifah Abu Bakr. I began it with my question on the social effects which have resulted from the application of Islamic law in the Sudan.

[Answer] We can describe the social effects of the application of Islamic law in the Sudan following the issuance of these laws in September 1983 by making a comparison with some social aspects in the situation that prevailed in the years that preceded it, or at least the year that preceded it. We can give some examples of that. The issue of alcohol: a clear law was issued prohibiting the drinking of alcohol and dealings in it, purchase or sale, and made all effects of the drinking of alcohol, such as the disturbance of public security, forbidden and against the law. If we refer back to last

year regarding the application of Islamic law, I can say, I do not know how many bars were open in the capital of the Sudan, but I can say that approximately no districts or markets were to be found in the common sections where we did not find a "bar." None of the parks spread about through the capital did not basically exist to offer alcohol. There was no hotel, big or small, which we would not find offering alcohol. The drinking of alcohol was almost an ordinary matter which people did not find reprehensible because of their familiarity with it.

If you went into any of these places, you could find men, women, workers and you could find young students, attracted by someone drinking alcohol. The extent of the danger and the frequency of vexations which anyone would encounter if he went out in the streets of the capital after 2200 hours in the evening, especially if he tried to get a group taxi with four or five people, especially at a late hour of night, were well known in the capital. Indeed, all intelligent persons preferred not to drive their cars at a late hour of the night, considering what could happen because of another person driving while intoxicated.

All these phenomena have disappeared. You do not see people weaving around on the street. You do not find bars. The hotels do not offer alcohol. The parks have been cleaned out of alcohol.

[Question] Has that had an effect on people's relations with one another?

[Answer] Yes, there is no doubt that this has had a good effect on people's relations, to the point where jokes are now being made between wives and husbands regarding the effect of alcohol on the frequency of the husband's appearance in the home. In the past, husbands who drank alcohol would not return home until a late hour at night. Now they have started to come home early in the evening, and be gentle and familiar with their children.

The second aspect is that what these people would spend on alcohol, and most of them had limited incomes, now is being spent in the home on behalf of the family. In addition, the supply commodities which usually went with the drinking of alcohol were scarce, for instance various types of cheese and certain meats; now they are abundant.

This is what everyone has sensed. It is enough of an outcome, as far as we are concerned, that we are now prohibiting what God has prohibited, whereas our laws had been permitting what almighty glorious God had prohibited.

Perceptible Change

[Question] But does this mean that we can say that there no longer is anyone drinking alcohol in the Sudan, even if covertly?

[Answer] I believe that the drinking of alcohol has declined by a rate that could be between 95 and 98 percent. I assume this. There are some alcoholics who cannot rid themselves of the addiction, and there are some people who have resorted to making ordinary alcohol, by distillation or another means, because the courts and the trials which are publicized before us by the

press, radio and television every day state that there are some people who cannot quit drinking alcohol, especially those who are professional at making it. However, it has become difficult to get alcohol, and people are subjected to intense rebuke and stringent punishment. This punishment does not stop at flogging, which is the penalty in Islamic law, but goes beyond that to fines and imprisonment as well, especially if the drinking is accompanied by harassment of citizens. The traffic accidents which result from drunkenness have almost stopped. Many manifestations of this sort are now the subject of discussion among all the men, women and children in the street. That is the most obvious effect, because everyone and every person senses it, especially wives who have spoken of it with a form of bliss, joy and rapture.

[Question] What effect, then, do even the people who do not drink alcohol feel?

[Answer] Yes, even people who do not drink alcohol have felt it, because goods are now available and there now is self-assuredness and security over money and over public property, and, in addition to that, we find benefits which people might now sense, such as the loss of property that arises from automobile accidents; we find great savings there, but they are not directly noticeable, because the normal thing is that an individual's car is his own property, but if we compare this year with the preceding one from the standpoint of the flagrant losses that occurred in the area of cars or public property, we will find that there is a great difference.

The Manifestations of Social Change

[Question] However, when we ourselves concentrate on this aspect of social change, some people might level the charge against us that the penalty in Islamic law for alcohol, for instance, has been the cause of this social change. However, are there other social manifestations which have arisen from the shift to the Islamic platform, outside the area of alcohol?

[Answer] Yes, what I have mentioned has been just one effect. Let us take another example, from the issue of licentiousness, the diseases it leads to, the crimes it leads to, and the fights, struggles, aggression against people and physical attacks. You would see, especially in some sections, special hospitals which many people with limited incomes and poor people would frequent. You would see long lines of people who had gone for treatment. Now, if you go to the hospitals, you will see that the situation is totally different. Some of our doctor brothers have presented us with statistics on the hospitals, along with the types of diseases that people would bring to the hospital for treatment, with a comparison between the year preceding the Islamic transformation and the year of the application of Islamic law, in all fields of medicine, from fractures and wounds to various diseases including venereal diseases. That is, they are nice statistics, very accurate, on the actual conditions you see inside the hospitals. This comparison presents really amazing conclusions.

Through the statistics, for example, it is apparent that crime and acts of aggression against persons or property have declined by 40 percent. I can

say that the rates of these crimes are supposed to have declined by a rate greater than that, but there are extensive areas in the Sudan, and the Sudan is a continent, not just a country; I can say that there are parts of the Sudan which may perhaps not have heard of Islamic law and have retained their customs, in the form of drinking alcohol and so forth, and if the statistics show that the rate of crimes which lead to injuries has declined by 40 percent, this decline in reality is greater than that, because the decline in the rate observed in the towns and the capitals is computed over a greater area which Islamic law has not reached, areas where there is weak surveillance by the government as embodied by the police or various administrative agencies. These are the areas that have raised the rate. In the southern Sudan, for example, alcohol is still being drunk because of the special circumstances in the south, and I can say in brief that the decline in crime in its various forms has been a blessing of the application of Islamic law in the Sudan.

[27 Oct 84 p 13]

[Text] Today we are following up on our meeting with Dr Yusuf al-Khalifah Abu Bakr, in which we have primarily been concentrating on the social effects of the application of Islamic law in the Sudan. My next question was a direct, explicit one on the subject where the chairman of the Supreme Council for Religious Affairs and Trusts considers the greatest effect has arisen from the application of Islamic law in the Sudan.

[Answer] The greatest effect of our blessed step, which I pray almighty God will make a success and make strong, through his grace and help, is that Sudanese people have found themselves. How so? We felt in the past that we were strangers in our own country because we believed in one thing and believed that it was sound, but were governed by laws which had no connection with what we wanted, were not connected to our beliefs, our customs or our social traditions, and were not connected to the rituals and divine directives of our religion, because they permitted much of what almighty glorious God had prohibited. After the application of Islamic law, every Sudanese came to feel that he had found himself after having been lost, because he had come to live in a state in which his belief and instructions, his hopes and desires and aspirations for the future in this world or the hereafter interacted. That is, there came to be a harmony between what was inside the person, or the Sudanese, and the circumstances he was living in, the social circumstances, social life, the laws and orientations of the government's laws and public life in the country. After having been lost, they found themselves, and I can give an example. The discussions which are going on now among children and among women in informal groups, at funerals, at weddings, at meetings of friends and parties, what is taking place in them are issues related to blood indemnity and the problems of blood indemnity. The chapters of Islamic jurisprudence, which had been kept on the shelf and considered a sort of heritage, are now interacting with Sudanese society, because they are now part of its life.

The chapter on the tithe, and the tables on that, which were in effect a struggle for pupils who were studying them in schools and institutes, are now the subject of popular conversation. For example I receive telephone

calls throughout the day asking me for explanations about things in the tithe, such as the tithe on plowing, for instance. People might ask about plants and the tithe on those. This means that Islamic law is now the subject of social life about which people are talking. Indeed, it has become a part of their life and their makeup. I believe that that is an important psychological effect, as far as the application of Islamic law goes.

[Question] Does this psychological effect mean that the Sudan has achieved a fully Islamic society or that the gradual method which we heard in the conference means that the Sudan still has a great distance to go?

[Answer] Of course the Sudan has a great distance to go. We were ruled for about 90 years by the laws of colonialism, that is, from 1898 to 1983, approximately 100 years. There is no doubt that this has left its effect on people's thinking and values. It has left an effect on behavior and customs as well. The colonialist culture we have encountered inside our country, or have drunk up from abroad in other countries, has had a very great effect at least on a large segment of the society. The movies, stories and novels we see, which we have been exposed to, all have their effects. In order for these effects to be eliminated, first of all we do not consider rigidity in application to be appropriate. That is, it is enough for us to set out the legal provisions.

Let us take an example. We set out a legal provision to combat written or visual pornography or actual practice. To apply this law, we will need a long time. For example, the ladies' hair shops (coiffeurs) were all managed by men. A law has been issued which has given the owners of these shops a period of time to train their girls and women to assume the management of the shops and work in them, because all Sudanese families are conservative.

Swimming pools, for example; a law has not been issued shutting down swimming pools, but the owners of the hotels have felt that they were in a position which required that a practical step be taken. One person drew attention to this by way of religious accountability, preparing a petition against this situation because it was not in keeping with Islamic law, considering mixed swimming pools to be pornography.

A decree has not been issued shutting them down or eliminating them; rather, that has been left up to the owners of hotels. They have felt the need to change the situation and have taken the measure of setting aside times for men and other times for ladies.

In our view, we should not embark on the process of application rigidly but rather should adopt gentleness, gradualness and the effect of time. I believe that if things proceed as we want, we will need a period ranging from 10 to 15 years to attain an Islamic society. I do not say that we will attain a full Moslem society, because the full Moslem society was in the time of the prophet, on whom be God's peace and prayers. Individuals among us may perhaps not aspire to attain such a society, but we could attain a gracious Moslem society in which many of the phenomena which are contrary to Islam and with which almighty glorious God is not satisfied will disappear, and in which crimes, evil, and sins will be greatly reduced.

[Question] Has much change occurred in the curricula?

[Answer] In our opinion, the curricula, and this is my personal opinion, as a teacher who is concerned with the Islamic orientation, do not need greatly to be changed.

Why? In terms of subjects, we have enough at the various levels of education. Rather, our problem is the contradiction which existed between the school system on the one hand and the society and the laws on the other. That is, a child reads something about the dangers of alcohol, for instance, in school, and reads that it is prohibited for certain, then goes out into the street and finds his father drinking. The school environment lacked an Islamic orientation. Now there is an Islamic orientation in it. In terms of subjects, we do not need change; rather, we need reform in school life. That is, the prayer, for example, should be in the school schedule, and a decree has been issued in this regard.

However, without decrees from the competent ministers, everyone now is responsible for a system and will try, by his own incentive, to make life in his institution conform to the Islamic orientation which the government has embraced. Therefore I believe that gradually, with this intrinsic desire on the part of the people, God willing, things will be set right and every situation will assume its proper Islamic condition.

[Question] Your emphasis on the matter of gradualism is apparent. Do you imagine that in the period of 5 or 15 years that you mentioned this gradual social change will lead ordinary life to become compatible with Islamic growth, in the sense that work begins after dawn, and people go to rest and sleep a short time after supper, especially since this pattern is in keeping with the Sudan's climate?

[Answer] The Sudan here is different from other countries. Most people wake up after dawn and go to sleep after supper. That is, the business of staying up till dawn in the Sudan does not exist. I believe that we ourselves need to apply the honorable prophetic tradition: "Turn with the book, wherever it has turned." The word "book," of course, includes the sayings and doings of the prophet and it includes Islamic law in its broad sense. It is the tradition of the prophet, may God's prayers and peace be upon him, "Blessings were given to my nation at its early arrival." I personally consider that we, especially in a country like the Sudan, with its hot climate, if we start working at 0600 hours in the morning that will be better than 0700 hours. We now start at 0730 hours, although some government agencies start at 0800 hours.

[28 Oct 84 p 10]

[Text] In this final instalment of our interview with Dr Yusuf Khalifah Abu Bakr, chairman of the Supreme Council for Religious Affairs and Trusts, we deal with the law on the command of virtue and the prohibition of vice which organizes this basic aspect of the social life of Moslem society. I began by directing a question stating that people imagine that the command of virtue and the prohibition of vice are the task of every Moslem, so how should the law organize it?

[Answer] There is no doubt that the command of virtue and the prohibition of vice are the duty of every Moslem, but this law in practical fashion regulates the command of virtue and the prohibition of vice. Since that is a sensitive matter, it must not be left to individuals to carry it out as they wish, because some people might misunderstand the command of virtue and prohibition of vice. The law has organized this process. It has provided that the command of virtue and the prohibition of vice do not only cover religious matters, but rather concern all matters which are of concern to people in their lives. The law on the command of virtue and the prohibition of vice aims, in our understanding, at reforming the Sudanese people, and it means self-discipline from all aspects, even in terms of their health and good taste, for example. It starts with encouraging people to make the necessary acts of obedience, [and proceeds] to the development of taste, where we are concerned, for example, that there be a garden in the house, however small it might be, in which shade trees are planted, and people are concerned with their health -- pregnant women are concerned with their fetuses before they are born and health rules are observed regarding them. That is, it encompasses all matters of life. Therefore, we have specialized technical committees for the command of virtue and the prohibition of vice. There is a committee of doctors, a committee of men in public health or health of the environment, and a committee for social affairs and matters. We also have a committee of artists which will explain to us matters related to art and things that lie within the context of the command of virtue and the prohibition of vice. We have a committee of architects to offer us advice as regards the command of virtue and the prohibition of vice.

[Question] Could you give us some examples? What is the relationship between architects and the command of virtue and the prohibition of vice?

[Answer] For example, the tendency that exists in the country prompts everyone to insist on building his home of reinforced concrete and pouring into it a fantastic amount of iron and cement. Its costs become very exorbitant. This committee sets out for us a model of a simplified home which embodies the art of Islamic architecture, and it shows us how we can build houses at the lowest cost. Most houses here are made of brick or mud. This committee shows us how we can build a pretty house whose beauty is no less than that of a house built of adobe, cement and iron, although it is built of brick, and imparts an element of aesthetics and taste in these matters.

The Role of Customs

[Question] Does its work, for instance, include modifying houses so that concealment will be achieved, so that neighbors will not learn about their neighbors' homes?

[Answer] That is something which has basically been realized among us, by virtue of customs and traditions. We do not suffer from them in all of Sudanese society, even in the towns. There are many social customs which we feel ought to be retained. For example, in some environments, if a young man in a village wants to get married, the young people in the village who are builders build him the house, specialists in roofs build the roof, painters come and paint the house from inside, and he finds that many things have been

completed in his house although that has not cost him anything, because he is similarly indebted to others.

In cases of funerals, which here in the Sudan cost a great deal, we sometimes find donations from neighbors and friends rising above the need of the person who is holding this funeral, and a similar thing is the case with wedding customs.

So far we in the Sudan, in Khartoum and elsewhere, cannot find undertakers to take charge of preparing and burying the dead, because the people perform this operation, and the people who live in the section are the ones who prepare the dead person, dig out the grave and bury the dead person as well. The person who has been afflicted does not spend any money, but just defrays the cost of buying the shroud. We are careful to keep this type of custom. I am certain that the day an undertaker's shop is opened in Khartoum the people of the Sudan will be able to consider that the beginning of a catastrophe which will dissolve Sudanese society. Therefore we are now raising our children and teaching them how to dig graves, how to shroud the dead and wash them, and many gracious customs which we think should continue and whose wherewithal for life and survival we will provide.

[Question] What is the relationship between these customs and the command of virtue and prohibition of vice?

[Answer] The command of virtue and prohibition of vice is a positive act, not a negative one. It is an act not of the tongue but of the members of the body. It is an act of training. I can give you another example, which might entail some strangeness. We have set out a policy which we have held the people working in the command of virtue and prohibition of vice to. If someone is observed committing a crime, such as a woman making wine and distilling it for sale, what will their position be? Perhaps everyone presumes that if the members of the Society for the Command of Virtue and the Prohibition of Vice seize her, they will bring her before the police. However, the actual situation is that the task of the Society for the Command of Virtue and the Prohibition of Vice, if they see a person committing a crime, is to stand between him and the police and the judiciary.

[Question] How so?

[Answer] If the companions of the prophet, on whom be God's prayers and peace, saw a criminal being taken off to be tried, let us say he was a thief who had committed a theft, they would stand between him and an appearance before the judiciary, but would give him something that would ward the Islamic punishment off from him. Therefore the positive action of the command of virtue and the prohibition of vice is if they witness someone committing a crime, and the nature of this crime might have its own circumstances, the instructions which were issued to them were to deal with the matter without bringing the person committing the crime before the judiciary. If a woman is seized distilling and making alcohol, the men in the command of virtue and the prohibition of vice investigate the circumstances which pushed her to it, in order to investigate the family this woman is looking after and her social circumstances. They seek to find better work for her, for instance,

find work for her in an organization, and seek out something which she can benefit from which will meet her needs. They may collect contributions for her, and, after that, show her that making and selling alcohol is prohibited, that God said what he said about it, and that the law imposes such-and-such on the person committing it. This is a practical method which was tested, especially in the villages, when the law prohibiting alcohol was issued. People spontaneously directed themselves toward all the people active in the area of these repugnant things, and compensated them with different, more noble and better work, which would be sufficient for their needs.

Although the law on the command of virtue and the prohibition of vice gave the immunity to the head commander and prohibitor which it has given to judges during trial, in the sense that no one can tell him "This is none of your business" or "What do you want," defame him, or impede work -- although the law has given him this immunity, we have nonetheless called on the people performing the command of virtue and the prohibition of vice to observe patience if they are defamed. None of them has used this right. The people working in the command of virtue and prohibition of vice receive absolutely no compensation or salary. This is a condition in the law. If they are given compensation, the command of virtue and prohibition of vice will become a profession and occupation, and the meaning of this task will become dead in the hearts of the people carrying it out. However, when it is divorced of compensation, we are given the chance to choose the people who meet the necessary characteristics and the people who have the competence to command virtue and prohibit vice, and their work will be voluntary for almighty glorious God and out of consideration for his sake.

[Question] Where do they make their living then?

[Answer] Everyone from his ordinary job. Merchants live on their commerce, and workers on their work. There are no people "engaged full time" in the command of virtue and prohibition of vice. Special committees take charge of resolving the cases which are presented to them.

Concealment and Protection

[Question] Could you explain what you have stated about the companions of the prophet having given thieves something which would ward Islamic penalties away from them?

[Answer] An example of that is what appeared in some of the prophet's traditions. Zayd ibn al-Salt recounted the statement "I heard Abu Bakr al-Sadiq saying 'If you take someone who drinks, I would prefer it if God concealed him, and if you take a thief I would prefer it if God concealed him.'" To al-Zubayr ibn al-'Awwam, may God be content with him, who was a senior prophet and one of the 10 people proselytizing for paradise, they brought a thief, and he forgave him and they said, "Are you forgiving a thief?" He said, "Yes, unless he is brought to the imam. If he is brought to the imam, God will not excuse him if the imam excuses him."

Our lord 'Ali ibn Abu Talib forgave a thief, and was told, "Are you forgiving a thief?" He said, "Yes, unless the imam is informed. If the imam is informed, God will not excuse him if he excuses him."

Sa'id ibn Jubayr and 'Ata forgave a thief who had been passed before them, and they were told, "Do you consider this?" They said, "Yes, as long as he is not brought before the imam."

Ibn 'Abbas, al-Zubayr and 'Ammar took a thief and released him. 'Akramah told Ibn 'Abbas, "What you did was bad, when you released him." He said, "You have no mother, for if it had been you you would have been glad to have been released."

They were the senior companions of the prophet, on whom be God's prayers and peace, and it was their custom to keep thieves from coming before the judge. They would forgive thieves lest punishment be imposed on them. However, that was before they would reach the imam. If they reached the imam there would be no forgiveness regarding any of God's Islamic penalties. However, it is permissible to give forgiveness before they reach the imam, the judge or the police.

[Question] But isn't this charge directed against us, that we are trying to help the criminal?

[Answer] The spirit of Islam is that we should ward the Islamic penalties away from God's servants as much as we can. If they deviate from the Islamic penalty, which is the severance [of the hand], for example, they will enter into the sphere of reprimand and will be punished by other penalties. Islam is not concerned over severance, and is not concerned over the application of Islamic penalties, that is, the spirit by which we ought to view Islamic penalties. For instance, Tariq ibn Hisham related that a woman committed fornication, and 'Umar, may God be satisfied with him, said, beseeching a pardon for her, "I saw how she was praying at night, and how brave she was and knelt and prostrated herself. Then a seducer came to her." 'Umar sent for her, and she said when she came to 'Umar because they talked to her about what 'Umar had said behind her back, and she said it was as 'Umar had said, and he released her. Another example, from Abu Kabshah, was that Abu al-Darda', may God be content with him, brought a woman who had committed theft, and told her, "Did you steal? Say no."

[Question] Some people might say that that is giving assistance to criminals.

[Answer] It is assistance to criminals to escape from Islamic penalties so that another penalty may be imposed on them which might be a rebuke or chastisement. The rebuke sometimes might be harsher than the Islamic penalty.

[Question] Doesn't that entail negligence of Islamic penalties?

[Answer] That does not entail negligence of Islamic penalties, in my opinion, because the prophet's tradition says "Ward the Islamic penalties off from the Moslems as much as you can, for instance if you find a way out for a Moslem, release him. It is better for an imam to err concerning a pardon than to err concerning a punishment."

[Question] That means that this is a view that totally differs from the view of secular laws regarding crime and criminality.

[Answer] That is true. The conduct of a Moslem judge is totally different from that of an ordinary judge or the office of the public prosecutor; the civil judiciary are anxious to attack the accused person, affix a charge on him, and impose a penalty on him. In Islam, the conduct of the Moslem judge and the Moslem office of the public prosecutor is to implore reservations for the accused person, while not causing the rights of the others to be infringed.

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MUP LEADER AHMED BEN SALAH INTERVIEWED

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic No 243, 6-12 Oct 84 pp 36-38

[Interview with leader of Popular Unity Movement Party Ahmed Ben Salah:
"I am for the Downtrodden Tunisian, not the Fortunate One"; date and place
not specified]

[Text] I met him at a certain place in Switzerland. There was great wariness. My escort, one of the leaders of the Popular Unity Movement (MUP), Hisham al-Safi, accompanied me to the location of the appointment. The time and place of the meeting had been the subject of strict secrecy. I had not seen the former Tunisian minister Ahmed Ben Salah since the trial in the spring of 1970. Until late 1969 he had filled the Tunisian political universe, newspapers, magazines and television. Therefore I was surprised by him. Thick white hair above his forehead gives him, at 60 years of age, a new dignity. However, his general appearance was distinguished by a mustache which made him unrecognizable to me. He is a man who seems younger due to the trim figure he has recently acquired. He began by shaking hands, embracing and greeting me. Then we proceeded immediately to the discussion which we will recount below. With regard to this conversation, I would like to say first that Ben Salah was sharp-tongued, contrary to the rumor that he has mellowed a great deal and even that he has moved somewhat closer to the authorities. This made me wonder if this were a permanent political line or a political line which was attempting to cause this rapprochement to take place. Secondly, the man has not changed as far as his manner of speech is concerned. He impetuously rushes to "take command" just as he did before. Does this hide manifestations of an old shyness, and does he protect himself by assuming a sharp tone, as one of his acquaintances told me long ago? Or is it an established characteristic in his nature? Thirdly, Ben Salah likes to talk. He talks a great deal. Whether you agree or disagree with him, he is still able to rivet you and hold your attention, just as he always has done. Fourthly, if in his conversation he paints Tunisia with a black brush and in dark colors, you sense that the man does this perhaps because of the bitterness he feels in being away for nearly 15 years, and because he yearns for his country. This is obvious as he talks. Perhaps too he is bitter over the status of his movement. It is the only movement to have a permanent and total break with the authorities. It is the only opposition movement which experienced an internal division from the outside in Tunisia. It was believed that the government was behind the split.

Neither in his interview which we are publishing nor in his normal conversation did Ben Salah say anything good or evil about Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali. Does he want to maintain a fine thread with the regime, or does a past relationship cause him to respect the man, even though he opposes his policies and the policies of his government? Those close to Ben Salah remember that Mzali gave him a book which came out in 1970 when the former minister of economy was under house arrest and the object of wrath. This gift cost Mzali his ministerial post at the time. The following is the dialogue with Ben Salah:

[Question] In view of your positions and statements, it seems as if you did not bear great responsibility in the Tunisian regime, since you condemn it at times, even though you participated to a great extent in shaping its image during an important period of approximately 13 years when you were in charge of the ministry. If in the shift of 1969, this regime changed its economic direction, until about 1980 it maintained the same procedures, especially in dealing with those holding different opinions?

[Answer] There is mild provocation in this question. The question is based on some factual matters, but also on a large proportion which are not factual. Since you raise the question, you believe that the Tunisian régime has remained as it was and has always been the same as it is today. I personally do not deny everything in which I participated. There are historical factors which made us avoid resisting certain practices in the beginning. We were young and regarded the leadership with a great deal of respect. One did not imagine undertaking any actions which conflicted with the principles we believe in now and believed in then through this leadership which inculcated them in us. I will not try to justify my position, but I do want to bring up one matter. In short, what happened to me was due to a policy which was not only a social and economic policy, but also a comprehensive policy based on a fundamental, cultural program aiming at changing the structures of Tunisian society, the social relations within it and its political practices. People have understood now that this program was not an economic, social or cultural program, but a program to change the methods of government. Those who sentenced me understood this goal, but they stripped it of its principles and made the case look like the desire of an individual to take over another position of power. They failed to see that the goal, ideologically, intellectually and logically, would lead to the loss of the rationale for absolute power, autocracy and recklessness. If you asked, I would say that this is what I am pursuing in fact. We were in agreement in this pursuit when we were dreaming together, with those who were holding power. In the forefront of these was the head of state. There was total agreement that that was the goal. The objective was to protect Tunisia from more humiliation, imperialism and injustice. This cannot be accomplished by words, but by new social and economic relations and highly-developed levels of culture within the Tunisian society, since it is no longer possible for imperialism to set in or for someone to rule singlehandedly to the extent of establishing some groups which are well-off and others which are on the lowest level.

[Question] If we were in 1961, and you had the experience of the 1960's behind you, would you again rely on the same policy and the same methods

to apply it? In other words, in 1984 is Ahmed Ben Salah still the same man, and behind him the MUP? Has he developed? Or has he denied his past?

[Answer] That is not a question. On the contrary, it is a self-directed question reflecting a certain reluctance to evaluate the policy and evaluate certain people responsible for the policy. However, this reluctance is understandable and perhaps wariness of the future imposes it. However, I note that in the second question there is a continuation of the line of the first question with its mild provocation. Well, I cannot say that Ahmed Ben Salah is the same as he was. He is the same in his basic directions. That is not a subject of debate. If you want to be reassured about the directions, I will reassure you that the directions have remained as they were in their ideological, ethical and future bases. As far as the application of policy is concerned, it is not reasonable for that to remain the same. Since we believe in rationality and have great sympathy for all exalted values such as solidarity, group assembly and departure toward a bright future, a repetition in the same manner is neither reasonable nor logical. Tunisian society has changed. It has experienced events which have caused it to change even more and to sense a new awakening. Its requirements have grown and its aspirations have multiplied. Policies of repression and attempts to blot out personality set it apart. I have not denied nor will I deny the political directions. As for my former practices, I am responsible for many of them. I will not deny them either, because they were based on my listening closely to the concerns of the citizen who was downtrodden, not the one who was fortunate.

Necessary Effect

[Question] As leader of a political party, don't you think that maintaining the same ideas and methods tends to frighten Tunisian, Arab and foreign businessmen and investors? The question always comes up about the position of the private sector in your thinking and directions and in the thinking and directions of the movement you lead. Do you support the flourishing of this sector or its nationalization?

[Answer] It seems that all my talk has not produced the necessary effect. My answer is that I am not denying my directions, but these directions are not the directions some imagine them to be. I want to confirm that neither in my beliefs nor in my practices is there anything which can be understood to mean that I am against anything Tunisian. During the 1960's I did not undertake to nationalize any property of any Tunisian. If some of that did occur, it did so outside the governmental domain, within the context of practices which existed and still exist, and outside the framework of the plan. How many decisions were taken outside the framework of the plan which is a law binding everyone! Confusion came from the idea imposed by the foreign press that the cooperative movement in the agricultural sector was nationalization. Nationalization was divesting owners of their property and placing it in the hands of the state, while the cooperative sector was a private sector. Unfortunately the goal of our cooperative movement was not understood. We had made great strides on the path toward it. The goal in establishing the cooperative was to provide the intellectual and technical components and the production, human and social relations necessary to make

our country leap forward to a level of total independence in foodstuffs, or at least greater independence, which was not possible at that time through other methods than these. In recent years it has appeared that other methods have not produced results. If one compares foodstuff yields in the 1960's and in the present, taking into consideration demographic development, it becomes evident that our foodstuffs dependence has increased and that the retreat from the cooperative policy has not been replaced by a beneficial policy. Besides the cooperative, we were striving to retain small acreages at the family level to preserve the rural environment and rural existence as a refuge for many new kinds of life. These plots would not have had a great impact. The large acreages and industrialized agriculture would have been capable of providing the country's needs and achieving self-sufficiency in foodstuffs. Where do we stand in relation to the nationalization of which we are accused? Where do we stand in relation to the absence of the private sector? We built our ideology in Tunisia on the coexistence of the three sectors. They fought us, saying, "Why were the three sectors absent from agriculture?" The fact is that we did not intend to introduce the cooperative system so fast.

[Question] Let us leave this point for later. There is a question about it.

[Answer] That is not the problem. The three sectors (public, cooperative and private) existed. It was possible to make a retreat in agriculture in order to leave certain small private holdings, not collective ones, with the assurance that large acreages would be the means for solving the problem of self-sufficiency in foodstuffs. As for the private sector, how many times the leftists accused me of having a policy which was bourgeois and of being behind capitalism in Tunisia! I **have** investment concessions to Tunisians, and Tunisians alone, not foreigners. We did not give concessions to foreigners, especially by law. Even for Tunisians, the concessions were offered for more investment, not for making people rich. We were busy preparing legislation which did not give us much importance to the nature of the sector, whether private, public or cooperative, as it did to the problems of administration, benefit, social relations, cultural development and technological development. At the same time we sought state supervision within the three sectors.

We did not facilitate the entry of foreign capital into our country. Nor did we facilitate the entry of private Arab capital into our country, because we were delighted with our situation. We had to firmly fix our position so that no foreign attitude might affect us. We had to build valid bases for our economy in order to know how to carry on a discussion with others. We welcomed Arab state capital. Arab capital assumed responsibility for financing several Tunisian projects. Today we give our land to Arab investors to be exploited for 100 or 200 years. We have not done a good deed for Arabism. On the contrary, we have mined the path of Arab rapprochement in Tunisia especially. On the Arab level there has been no agreement yet on the bases of a balance in Arab societies for the sake of rapprochement. This financing occurred. The agricultural and economic structures are fragile. The competition on which policy was based after the 1960's did not produce the results it promised, despite the French, American, personal and group weapons used.

Report of 1968

[Question] Let us return to a point we began to deal with a little while ago. According to it, some people confirm that Ben Salah was against the introduction of cooperatives in agriculture in 1968. This statement conflicts with prevailing opinion. Is this true, and what is the reason for it?

[Answer] It is not a rumor, but a recorded fact. It was formulated in the introduction to the 1969-72 plan which was prepared during 1968 and also in the report I gave to the central committee of the Destourian Socialist Party (PSD) which met in March 1969 to review the directions of this plan. At the time I said in effect that the selection of production units of the agricultural sector was a sound choice, but one that had to be implemented gradually, by degrees. However, the president himself intervened and said, "I don't agree with Ahmed Ben Salah. We must complete agricultural reform this year (1969), so Ben Salah can deal with the industrial sector next year." Nevertheless we promised ourselves that we would not begin the experiment in a whirlpool. We decided to prepare two types of studies in order to delay implementation. However the implementation process began to be speeded up, as if there were a conspiracy against the entire direction. Everyone began at full speed setting up production units, despite the plan and despite the studies.

[Question] Many people think your trial was a political trial and that you were treated with great injustice. However, they feel that you committed a political error in escaping from prison and fleeing from Tunisia. That conflicts with your usual tendency to face problems squarely and not flee from them.

[Answer] If it weren't for the atmosphere of this meeting, this question would not merit an answer. I did not escape from prison. I set myself free for valid reasons. I understood and learned and it became evident to me later, in the factual evidence and testimony of certain people, that there was a clear determination to assassinate me in prison. Afterwards, attempts were made.

[Question] Your position on pluralism is not clear. Is it the same position on pluralism which the liberal West maintains, or does the MUP have a specific, distinctive opinion about pluralism and rotation of power?

[Answer] The five-point plan which we issued in 1966 is clear in this regard. We were the first to begin calling for pluralism before other in Tunisia had conceived of it, especially those who feigned democracy. I have a question. If you do not applaud what is happening in Tunisia now and do not consider it to be pluralism, you are not a democrat and do not believe in pluralism? Personally I do not agree with what is called "pluralism" in Tunisia at present, because it is corrupted pluralism. Pluralism requires a total environment. Where are press freedoms, with newspapers being suspended one after the other? What is this pluralism, with Tunisians exiled? For example, who are the people who talked about Drisa Guiga and said he was unjustly treated and brought to trial in order to cover up the errors of others? Am I the only one who was compelled to come out with that?

[Question] Actually there are newspapers which have been discussing Driss Guiga and his trial. They have said that he was treated unjustly and that the regime was putting itself on trial. More to the point, what is the concept of pluralism in the MUP?

[Answer] If we did not believe in pluralism, how would we exist? We do not call it "pluralism." We call it the existence of political forces." The right of political forces to exist and to struggle for national or pan-Arab goals is sacred. The existence of our movement is simply proof that this movement, its leaders and combatants believe in a kind of pluralism and in the morality of this pluralism.

[Question] Is it the Western concept of pluralism, or do you have a different concept?

[Answer] I do not think the West is a model of democracy. Nor do I think America is a model of democracy. Naturally, I do not consider the Soviet Union to be a model of democracy. In Tunisia during the 1950's and 1960's we aspired through an economic, social cooperative and fiscal policy to make Tunisia capable of emerging as a rare example of a people, state and society which has arisen to escape from the claws of imperialism and decided to refuse to live under any kind of hegemony. The battle we waged was a political and cultural battle, since we embraced most of the thinking, technology and methods of work which both the West and the East produced, but through reliance on our firmness and spirit. If the regime renewed its methods, accepted real rotation of power and established a different type of political life, it would be possible to rally forces. The problem is not one of governing alone, but also one of renewing Tunisian society. We may remain in the opposition until we die, but people will know how to die resisting, now crawling on their stomachs.

Bread Revolution

[Question] At the beginning of this year the country experienced the shock of the bread revolution. Has the country overcome this problem or do the causes which led to it remain?

[Answer] Certainly the main cause was the quality of government. This government thinks that recognition of its legitimacy is a basic condition for the establishment of parties. However, he who demands recognition of his legitimacy must feel in the depths of his heart that he is no longer legitimate. The structural causes which led to the January events still exist and are represented by both the economic and political choices and the breakdown in the credibility of the regime. This is not the talk of a fanatic opponent or someone wanting revenge. On the contrary, it is the talk of the people who turned out in January. Today everything has to change. The country needs radical changes. For years we have proclaimed the necessity of holding a meeting to be attended by all vital forces. No subject would be barred from discussion in order to lift the country out of its crisis. One must recognize that a new state of affairs has come into existence in Tunisia and that the future holds other mines. Mutual contradiction exists and is strong and violent. The society has developed, and its needs

have increased. Privileges are limited to a small group. The regime is stubborn and has no objection to armed confrontation with the people. Therefore dangers still surround Tunisia. The usual treatments are no longer useful. The potential for providing real security has diminished. The private sector which I mentioned has lost decisively all reason for security, because it became reckless and sought recourse in a certain kind of government. Nations can become strong on the basis of an element, and that element is the equilibrium of society. It is an equilibrium between the state and society, the government and society and within the society. It is the foundation for health, consent, permanence and vital stability.

[Question] In practical terms, what is the way out?

[Answer] I could discuss this if I returned to Tunisia free and at liberty and if I were able to take initiatives. One cannot take initiatives from abroad. They require contact with people and precise knowledge of things, not fanciful ideas cut off from reality, a concept of ideals, or ready-made molds. We aim at serving the country, Tunisian society and ourselves and our beliefs at the same time. The people in Tunisia for the most part share with us these beliefs which confirm basic values. When we are on the spot, with the people, then we can meet and define the bases to be used to emerge from the crisis. First it must be recognized by all that matters are not in good order. One must eradicate the problem of these generational diseases represented in the problem of succession and who will be the heir of so-and-so. It is a problem created by the regime. It was not apparent when we were in the government. At that time no one was thinking of replacing Bourguiba. It became a problem when the regime became weak. Instead of a reaction favoring an open-door policy, there was fear and reactions in that direction. Thus the crises multiplied, and perhaps other crises will occur. How to get out of them? With the army? They are preparing the army to emerge on the scene. What is the army, if not an instrument of the people, not the regime? Why is it being transformed into an instrument against the people? Inasmuch as it is used from time to time, it might refuse to be used against the people. It might turn against the government, thinking that the citizens are right. Though some elements consider themselves to be among the fortunate, this state of well-being can burst and dissolve, even if protected by tanks. Either there will be an explosion which will destroy everything, or erosion will occur as a result of the successive explosions of 26 January 1978, the events of Gafsa in January 1980 and the events of this year in January 1984.

[Question] And the solution?

[Answer] It is in consultation among all national forces. We have clear ideas which can be submitted at the appropriate time. However, one must eradicate these generational diseases represented in the problem of claims to succession.

THE MUP

[Question] The MUP, which you head, is one of the political forces which is trying to impose itself in the country. What is its position in general, with respect to the regime, and with respect to the opposition?

[Answer] We consider ourselves to be a progressive national movement striving to crystalize both ideal and realistic stages for building a balanced society based on the new socialism which many generations throughout the world are dreaming about today. They have become fed up with the weakness of European socialist systems, eliminated the narrow-mindedness of East European socialism and been disgusted by the wavering of leaders of the Third World and their preoccupation with matters other than their duties toward the people. One must get out of this dilemma with new concepts for generations from the countries which were under imperialism and destroyed by the nightmare of lack of culture or the nightmare of envelopment in cultures other than their own. They have begun to revive hope for a return to their values. We consider ourselves to be a movement which meets the aspirations of all those who believe in nationalism first and pan-Arabism second in its cultural dimension, not in debased sense which flies from the proposal of one unity to another. Pan-Arabism in our view is a cultural rallying in face of the menace of varied and fatal mistakes committed in a desire to demolish all these values. We believe that we must correct what there is within us in our country. Reform is not an end in itself but a step toward making the Tunisian people capable of arming themselves in the face of foreign forces and of contributing capital to build a humane civilization. This does not mean that we want to be the only force to exist in Tunisia, because such solitary existence is not sound. The present stage requires a kind of compact collective solidarity in order to emerge from the situation our country is in, with its loss of security, in the profound sense of the word, and the loss of any future program for Tunisian society. The problem is a problem of practices, structures, and a rational organization of the affairs of society and, even before that, of the affairs of state. The state must be subject to control, and those running it must be equal to the tasks entrusted to their care and equal to the present state of affairs. The basic mode of action for us is to work for the equilibrium of society and for equilibrium among all forces which make up society, including the regime which is only one element among many and must not be preponderant.

There Must Be a Meeting

[Question] Do you think in the foreseeable future that the achievement of a national pact can overcome the problem which the country faces?

[Answer] We have called for this at times. In our opinion, if the matter is serious, we should hold a meeting, with no prior conditions, in order to try to make the governmental regime harmonize with the new conditions in Tunisia. We are not only an opposition. We were not created for opposition alone. On the contrary, we were created to build and rebuild our country.

[Question] But opposition is constructive!

[Answer] The opposition with its particular character in Tunisia? The regime created it, not by law, but through its behavior and practices. We were proposing to reform matters among ourselves, from the inside. Our goal was to prepare a complete section of the 1969-72 plan concerning the development of institutions and making them harmonize with the new conditions at that time in 1969. We thought that society had changed. That required the

development of institutions. How do matters stand now after 15 years? The idea for this development has been agreed upon since that time. It was discussed in depth between the head of state and me. One must think about and discuss such matters in the context of a view to the future. Without a view to the future and a program for the future, there is only intransigence and death.

[Question] If there were free elections in Tunisia, would the MUP agree to participate in them?

[Answer] How could that be? In addition to the fact that participation could not produce results, it would be an obvious clear, tacit admission that the current situation in the country could admit real elections. Entering such elections in an atmosphere like that would be simply a justification of the existence of that atmosphere, with no compensation for the society and the country. On the contrary, it would strengthen the negative aspects.

7811

CSO: 4504/38

POLITICAL OBSERVERS CONSIDER NEXT YEAR DECISIVE

London AL-MAJALLAH in Arabic No 244, 15-19 Oct 84 p 32

[Article by 'Abd al-Latif al-Firati: "New Tunisian Government for Old Problems"]

[Text] The political year in Tunisia usually begins at the same time as the school year. The year 1984 was no exception to the rule. The first cabinet meeting after the recess was convened at approximately the same time schools reopened. However, this meeting, which was chaired by the head of state himself, did not deal with the important problems facing the country. On the contrary, it was content with examining a number of minor matters. The reason is that problems concerning the fate of the country are most often discussed in the political bureau of the ruling Destourian Socialist Party. It is the organ which usually controls the direction of government policy. It seems that in fact it has determined the strategy for action during the new political year, a year which will be decisive according to observers in Tunisia.

This is due to three factors:

1. It is the year following the year which witnessed the greatest shock the country has experienced since independence nearly 30 years ago. There will be redoubled efforts to overcome the complications of this shock and to save the country from its recurrence due to certain important and unpopular decisions which the government may be forced to take if it faces a slump in economic conditions.
2. It is a year which will witness the first communal elections under legal political pluralism, with several parties established on the scene.
3. It is a year in which the federation of labor unions led by Habib Achour, the General Federation of Tunisian Labor (UGTT), will hold its first congress in new circumstances, following the establishment of pluralism in the domain of labor unions.

All these factors, separate on the one hand and intertwined on the other, undoubtedly will make their particular imprint on the political year 1984-1985.

Changing Ministries

It is certain that the authorities, headed by Mohamed Mzali, want to face the new political year with a new government "capable of confronting the problems which stand in the way of the country in a framework of harmony." Mohamed Sayah, former director of the Destourian Socialist Party, was one of the pillars of authority during the 1970's. He returned to the government, because it was the president's wish, as minister of Equipment and Housing 1 year after his departure. He had left because of the pressure of struggles at the highest levels. Mzali wanted to link his return with a comprehensive reshuffling of cabinet members involving various ministries such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Defense, Social Affairs, Finance, Economy, Transport and Communications and Information. Through this reshuffling he wanted to bring into the government new personalities who were closer to him and more capable in his opinion of confronting what the country faces on the political and economic zones.

However, this wish of the prime minister's was countered by another wish on the part of President Bourguiba who, according to the constitution, has the sole power to appoint, change and dismiss ministers. The president wanted to study the situation carefully and wait. Observers generally believe that the prime minister will be able to persuade the president to form the government which the prime minister wants. He personally would retain the Interior Ministry for another period of time, and a new minister of state would be appointed to help him. They would get rid of certain ministers such as Minister of Foreign Affairs Beji Caid Essebsi and Minister of Social Affairs Mohamed Ennaceur. They would replace the minister of Finance and perhaps the minister of planning, divide some ministries, and redistribute certain ministerial portfolios. They would also make Mezri Chekir the minister of defense. He is a protégé and the right-hand man in the ministry which takes responsibility for administration of the interests of the prime minister's office. A new personality, Dr Hamouda Ben Slama, would be introduced in the government as a minister. This seems to be a new manifestation of an open-door policy, because Ben Slama comes from an opposition party, the Movement of Socialist Democrats (MDS) which he left in a tumult 1 year ago, without joining or expecting to join in the future, according to his own words, the Destourian Socialist Party.

Austerity Policy

Hamouda Ben Slama played an important role in preparing the resolution granting amnesty to a group from the Islamic Tendency Movement (MTI) and releasing them from prison. He also played a role of no less importance in organizing the dialogue between the prime minister and groups of intellectuals in the country.

One may ask why there are all these changes in the make-up of the government. Can that modify the actual state of affairs?

The answer is that the government, in the forefront of which is Mzali, realizes the importance of developments which will occur in the coming months, and this is what makes it imperative to take appropriate decisions.

Despite signs of surmounting the shock which occurred at the beginning of 1984, Mzali in fact wants two things:

1. To erase from the minds of Tunisians the crucial days they lived through at the beginning of 1984.
2. To make preparations so that the country does not experience another similar shock at a time when Tunisia needs to make unpopular decisions and pursue a policy of austerity. The Tunisian is not accustomed to such a policy, and the policy seems to contradict the manifestations of luxury maintained by some people who have acquired wealth quickly, and in some cases illegitimately.

Semi-official sources have assured AL-MAJALLAH that one of the signs of surmounting the problem is a more profound application of the political open-door policy to the extent allowed by political life with its diverse aspects.

However, the open-door policy notwithstanding, it seems that the government continues to pursue the policy of plunging ahead with scant recognition of the current economic situation which is marked to a great extent by complex problems and the continuous decline in average growth rates, despite the slight improvement noted after 1982. In such a situation, it seems contradictory for the government to demand belt-tightening and sacrifice while it is constantly chanting that the economic situation is good.

With this contradictory chant, the labor unionists, whether in the old established organization, the UGTT or the more recent organization, the National Federation of Tunisian Labor (UNTT), find it is an opportune moment to call for a wage increase in 1984. The government confirms that it will not accept one and that the increases in previous years cover the increase across the board in inflation figures cited by labor experts. These labor experts confirm that the purchasing power of the people they are observing is being corroded, and quick intervention is called for to bring the situation back to normal.

The communal elections set for the spring of 1985 are preoccupying not only the labor federation but all political forces in the country as well. Except for the Destourian Socialist Party which will enter these elections in force, all other political forces are asking today if it is in their interest and if it is logical for them to enter these elections. Undoubtedly there are political organizations determined not to enter any elections in Tunisia "as long as the political climate is lacking in real freedoms." At the forefront of these organizations is the Popular Unity Movement (MUP) led by the exiled Ahmed Ben Salah, and perhaps to a lesser extent, the MTI which has been fully immersed in reorganizing its ranks, following the release of its leadership, after 3 years of prison and exile.

However, most of the opposition, especially the Communist Party, the MUP and the MDS which are the recognized opposition, face a perplexing question:

Is the climate in fact suitable for entering elections in which the chances will be equal and the ballot box will have the final say?

As an MDS leader told us, "There is still bitterness over the experience of the legislative elections of 1981 with their blatant falsification. But do we have any choice other than entering the electoral battle to confirm our existence?"

There are certainly two orientations in these movements:

The first feels that participation is necessary because it provides a good platform for communication and because "one has never given up hope that the regime will abandon the methods it has used in the past."

The second feels that the most important, basic guarantees have not yet been provided for conducting democratic elections and that participation is tantamount to supporting a whitewash of the regime and justifying its undemocratic position.

It is certain that these movements will have to take their final positions at the beginning of the new year. However, according to observers, the parties which participated in the elections of 1981 will most likely participate in the communal elections of next year. Perhaps even other movements not yet legally recognized will participate.

7811

CSO: 4504/38

SADDAM STRESSES VIGOR OF BA'TH PARTY DURING CEREMONY

Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 17 Oct 84 p 3

[Excerpts] Seeing the faces of the comrades who have spoken, I recalled all the memories of the Party, from the time I was a partisan of the Party until the revolution occurred and was successful. And with these memories returned all the values for whose sake it was established and because of which it was victorious. But the real victory, comrades, is not to be found only in 17-30 July, but also in persistence in applying principles when the Party got systems and power and was faced with temptations and difficulties.

The essential links in the history of the Party before the revolution exist primarily in the memory, demeanor, and history of the comrades who bear the Party badge. Every faithful, ardent, and patriotic Iraqi shared in the honor of applying Party principles after the revolution, and today he takes part in defending them in the way you all see.

The Act of Fighting...A Conscious, Voluntary Act

In these recollections before the faces of the fighters, there passes before us a ribbon of difficult circumstances which the Party has passed through, or which have passed by it, or rather, which the Party has passed through, because the act of fighting is a conscious, voluntary act, and it was the Party which created the problems because it attacked them. Jokingly, and in response to a comment made to me on fitness, physically speaking, in which he said, "It has hurt us," I said that we have just begun and we are not boasting because our principles are young. A person's life is measured by what?...It is measured by what he leaves behind not by how many years he has lived. So as long as our principles are young, and they remain young as their will and capabilities are renewed, we will be young. However, in order for this youth to appear as it should, I have noticed that the physical fitness of the comrades, civilian and military, is not as it should be, whereas we want them to appear young not only in the application of ideas but also even in their physical fitness. What pains me is that some of them really appeared to be tired, though I know the heavy responsibilities and patriotic fervor which makes each one of you work day and night in the service of the people, and that is a great honor.

It is a great honor that the concern of the partisans in the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party is to serve their people, girding their loins day and night every day and in detail so the people will see the principles in their behavior. However, I believe that one aspect of premature exhaustion is due to being fat, to a lack of time spent with sports, and a lack of attention to other matters, for sports renews a person's vitality the way reading renews his thought. Going back, I will say...if someone listens to anecdotes and not to Party history, even though you have presented an important aspect of Party history through anecdotes, we cannot be surprised by the simplicity of the means which the Party used, and which in spite of that enabled it to launch a successful revolution and to continue on its way, praise God, as you know, and the answer is because our party used simple means because of the simplicity of the principles it believes in.

12547

CSO: 4404/58

IRAQ

BRIEFS

SOUTHERN PLANTING PROJECT--The Ministry of Agriculture and Agricultural Reclamation in Iraq has announced the creation of a national campaign to plant grains. The agricultural sector organizations will participate in order to prepare for the coming planting season and to secure food supplies in Iraq. Agricultural specialists have confirmed that the great importance of providing the country's needs for wheat and barley had become obvious. This is especially true since the ability to plant them is countrywide, particularly in the areas that are irrigated or have good rainfall. In order to reach the required goal, the early movement is preparation for the new agricultural season. There are large areas remaining uncultivated where it may be possible to plant barley if there is not enough assistance for the planting of wheat. Therefore committees have been established in all the provinces to investigate all the areas, beginning with the subdistrict, the smallest administrative unit. The inspection will designate all the fallow lands, whether it is distributed, contracted to the farmer, privately owned, or under another type of arrangement. The possessor faces an ultimatum, for if he does not undertake measures that would guarantee that the land is prepared, in 1 week, for planting grain this winter season, the committees may dispose of it and rent it to peasants or investors according to law No 35 of 1983 which states that no land is to be left fallow in the new season. /Text/ /London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 80, 20 Oct 84 p 35/ 12551

CENTRAL BANK GOVERNOR REPLACED--Last week in Baghdad a decree was issued dismissing Mr Hasan al-Najafi from his post as governor of the Central Bank and appointing Mr Hikmat al-'Azawi as his replacement at this post. An informed Iraqi source told AL-TADAMUN that al-'Azawi is not one of the classicists in the field of finance and economics. In addition, he is from a governorate which borders on Iran, that being the governorate of Diyala, one of whose cities, Mandali, is a symbol of the courage of this governorate during the war with Iran. It should be pointed out Mr al-'Azawi was previously an employee of the Central Bank prior to 1968, and he has also worked in various government departments. He is one of the old-time Ba'thists and he used to be a member in the leadership of a district. As for now, he is one of the foremost cadres in the party. It should also be mentioned that before he worked at his new post, he worked as the minister of economics then the minister of trade. It remains to be said that Mr Hasan al-Najafi worked as governor of the Central Bank during the war years with Iran. There was a question going around the eve of al-'Azawi's appointment as governor of the Central Bank, the gist of which was: Was he chosen for the post-war period? That is on the basis of many expectations which indicate that the Iraqi leadership will make 1985 the year in which to end the war with Iran, either through political action or by escalating the confrontation by using advanced weapons that have not yet been used. [Text] [London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 70, 20 Oct 84 p 5] 12547

LEBANON

MINISTER OF DEFENSE SEES REVIVAL FOR LEBANON

Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic No 399, 13 Oct 84 p 27

[Interview with 'Adil 'Usayran, Lebanese Minister of Defense, by 'Imad Jawdiyyah, Beirut, date not specified]

[Text] During the first national conference for dialogue, held in Geneva on 1 Nov 1983, the Syrian Deputy President, Mr 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam described him as the "Dean of the Strugglers" because he was the first to call--during the conference--for "national armed resistance" against Israel, and the first to call for support for this resistance because, in his estimation, it is the only way of liberating the land and the people from the occupation.

This great shaykh is the leader 'Adil 'Usayran, the Lebanese Minister of Defense and Agriculture, the politician and man of culture who speaks several languages fluently, including French, English, German, Spanish and Italian.

And today, under the shadow of what is repeatedly said about a partial withdrawal of Israeli occupation forces from some occupied southern regions, we called on 'Usayran where he is temporarily living, to find out from him about the steps being taken by the government to fill any security vacuum that might be caused by the Israeli army, and to spare the regions it will withdraw from any sectarian strife. Herein follows the text of that discussion:

[Question] Can you inform us of what you know about the partial Israeli withdrawal from some of the occupied regions of Lebanon?

[Answer] From the beginning we have been calling for the Israeli army to withdraw from all Lebanese territories, which it seized by force without any legal basis to that occupation. We held that position when Israel withdrew from the two regions of 'Aley and al-Shuf. And we still hold it towards the implications now of a new partial withdrawal, because partial withdrawal does not achieve the desired goal, which is the liberation of Lebanon from enemy occupation, since Israel by remaining in other regions of Lebanon and by leaving their successors (agents) behind in the regions they will withdraw from does nothing but stir up strife among brother Lebanese in order to show the world that it had been keeping the peace in those regions, and that its withdrawal from Lebanon does not serve its interests.

Therefore, if Israel were serious about this withdrawal, it would withdraw from Lebanon completely and return to it the parts which it has cut off from Lebanese authority, because Lebanon is an independent nation recognized internationally by the United Nations and by all the countries in the world, and this independence must not be assaulted by a usurper nation that wants to expand at the expense of others.

[Question] Many Lebanese are afraid that sectarian strife will occur, similar to what happened in the mountains, in the regions which the occupation forces might withdraw from. What steps will you take to counter this possibility?

[Answer] Perhaps the partial Israeli withdrawal was precisely for that purpose, and only the awareness of the Lebanese will prevent Israel from achieving these aims, and precautions against the possibility of such disturbances occurring must be taken on all official and popular levels.

[Question] Some political observers think that the Israeli step of partial withdrawal could lead to the partition of Lebanon, and that this withdrawal would help to create specific sectarian cantons in the south. Do you see it that way?

[Answer] Ten years of suffering have crashed against the rock of Lebanon's immunity against any attempt to partition or divide it. Lebanon is one, united and indivisible. No matter how hard the winds blow to drive it to this fate, it acts naturally to thwart the plan, because as we have said it naturally refuses to be divided, because its unity comes from the eternal mutual cohesion between the regions and groups that it is composed of. And if the attempts temporarily succeed in creating divisions among the Lebanese and difficulty in traveling between Lebanese regions, all that goes away by itself the moment the reasons which caused it go away, and which cannot permanently without end maintain that estrangement. The unity of Lebanon as a land and a people is seen in miniature in its government, since the multiplicity of views that often occur among its members are nothing more than what arises from freedom of thought and the doctrine called democracy. These views, which are brought closer together by consultation and by rational, sincere and impartial discussion, are the foundation of governments.

[Question] During his latest visit to Lebanon, Lebanon asked the Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations Mr. Urguhart to take steps to expand the activity of the international emergency forces in the south so that these forces would be able to work with the Lebanese army in filling the security vacuum which the Israeli forces will leave during their withdrawal. What is the nature of the role which you expect the international forces to play in this respect?

[Answer] We hope that the international emergency forces, along with the forces of the legitimate authority, will fill the security vacuum that will occur if the enemy forces withdraw, and we hope that the countries that are participating in the emergency force working in the south will come to

understand the need for entrusting that role to their forces, because returning peace to southern Lebanon is their real task.

[Question] It is said that in the private meetings at Bikfayya the government agreed to open the coastal highway after the "Lebanese Forces" are withdrawn from it and the Lebanese army deployed. Did you really decide on such a step?

[Answer] The Lebanese government spares no effort to bring peace back and reopen communications to all areas of Lebanon, and that includes the coastal road to the south. A committee was formed for this purpose in one of the Bikfayya meetings to work to achieve that and to be prepared to confront any emergency in the event Israel begins a sudden withdrawal. This committee has carried out its task, and we hope that the outcome will be tangibly seen in the near future.

Needless to say, opening the coastal highway is vital to the people of the south for sending out their produce and reviving their economy in general, the economy which the occupation has choked off and landed in dire material straits.

[Question] What other tasks were given to the "southern emergency" committee?

[Answer] The tasks given to the emergency committee were many and diverse, but the most important was to bring together points of view among the citizens in the south to deny opportunity to those who would fish in troubled waters, and to ensure one united national front in the event of a withdrawal by the Israeli enemy, which hopes for fighting among the Lebanese. But the second matter, the most important, is working to coordinate efforts to open the coastal highway.

12547

CSO: 4404/58

AL-HUSAYNI BECOMES CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES SPEAKER

London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 80, 20 Oct 84 p 6

/Text/ Informed Arab circles were not surprised when the results of the elections for the presidency of the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies, which were held last Wednesday, became known. Despite the competition within the democratic parliamentary game familiar in Lebanon, all indications pointed to the victory of Biqa' deputy, Husayn al-Husayni, and the deposition of Kamil al-As'ad from the presidency. These sources pointed to what leaked about the meetings held in Damascus between several Lebanese leaders and Syrian authorities, who did not hide their opposition to the continued tenure of al-As'ad because of his support for the agreement of 17 May 1983 between Lebanon and Israel. At the same time Michel Samahah, President al-Jumayyil's emissary, returned from Damascus with another refusal--the acceptance of Kazim al-Khalil, deputy chairman of the National Liberal Party, or even the compromise candidate. Minister 'Adil 'Usayran.

When Minister Nabih Birri, in his meeting with Maj Gen Muhammad al-Khuli and then with 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, tried to promote the candidacy of 'Adil 'Usayran, he found Syria leaning toward Al-Husayni.

AL-TADAMUN's sources added that, in view of all this, President Amin al-Jumayyil has to support, at least secretly, the candidacy of al-Husayni, especially since his relations with speaker al-As'ad have chilled some in the past few months. Al-As'ad considers himself to have fallen twice victim to al-Jumayyil, first in his support of the 17 May 1983 accord and then in the president's sudden turn toward Syria. Al-Jumayyil's explanations, carried by emissaries, failed to convince al-As'ad to transfer the rifle from one shoulder to the other, especially after America extended bridges of understanding to Damascus.

Husayn Al-Husayni won 41 votes and al-As'ad 28, and a blank piece of paper was found in the box. Munir Abu Fadil won as deputy speaker of the chamber.

Those near to Speaker Kamil al-As'ad expect that he will join the opposition to the government and to those calling for coordination with Syria. Perhaps new alliances will arise comprising himself and BGen Raymond Iddih. In addition, these observers do not discount the possibility of /former/ Prime Minister Sa'ib Salam becoming the third ally.

On the other hand, it is self-evident that Husayn Al-Husayni's presence as head of the legislative body is a victory for the Shiites, who are demanding sectarian balance. /They want/ real participation by all the sects, so that there will not be an agreement between the Sunnis and the Maronites resembling the 1943 National Pact. Al-Husayni is one of the founders of the "Higher Shiite Islamic Council" and the "Movement of the Deprived." He was at the side of the missing Imam Musa Sadr when the Amal movement was formed, at the time Nabih Birri was fourth in command of the movement. Because of this, the relationship between Birri and al-Husayni is a mix of courtship and competition both inside and outside of the movement.

Even though it is still early, it is expected that al-Husayni's relationship with al-Jumayyil will be one of actual partnership in governing. The matter which may cause some confusion is that there is not only a president of the republic, but also a prime minister, who is a firm supporter of the Syrian line in Lebanon.

12551

CSO: 4404/57

SPECIAL FUNDS IN BANKS DETAILED

Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic 5 Sep 84 p 7

[Text] The total value of special funds (capital and reserves) in the consolidated balance sheets of the commercial banks was 2,978,000,000 Lebanese pounds at the end of 1983, compared with 2,162,000,000 pounds at the end of 1982, an increase of 816 million pounds, an increase of 37.7 percent.

This increase has been continuous since 1978, a result of consecutive increases by banks of their capital, such that the average rate of capital investment has come to be between 20 and 30 million pounds, compared with between 5 and 10 million pounds before the events began. Also, it has resulted from drawing upon amounts earned in interest, as a precaution in anticipation of events.

The rising increase will help apply the percentage which, beginning at the end of next year, the Bank of Lebanon has decided will be adequate investment amounts for the banking system.

Special funds held by banks increased from 683 million pounds in 1978, to 878 pounds in 1979, to 1.18 billion in 1980, to 1.668 billion in 1981, to 2.162 billion in 1982, and to 2.978 billion in 1983. The percentage increase over 4 years was 366 percent.

The amounts of special funds changed during 1983 as follows:

<u>Month</u>	<u>Amount in Billions of Pounds</u>
January	2.431
February	2.413
March	2.556
April	2.616
May	2.622
June	2.735
July	2.798
August	2.814
September	2.821
October	2.819
November	2.820
December	2.978

LEBANON

INTERBANK INTEREST RATES INCREASE

Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic 9 Sep 84 p 7

[Text] Interest rates on the Lebanese pound between banks (interbank rates) yesterday recorded a perceptible increase in comparison to the first days of the week, as follows:

1. Demand deposit rates varied between 15.5 percent and 16.5 percent compared to 15 percent and 16 percent on Thursday.
2. One week time deposit rates varied between 15.5 percent and 16.5 percent compared to 15 percent and 16 percent on Thursday.
3. One month time deposit rates varied between 14 percent and 15.5 percent compared to 12.5 percent and 13.5 percent on Thursday.
4. Two month time deposit rates remained the same, varying between 13.5 percent and 14.5 percent.
5. Three month time deposit rates remained the same, varying between 14.5 percent and 15.5 percent.
6. Six month time deposit rates remained the same, varying between 14.5 percent and 15.5 percent.

It should be noted that the rise is limited, as usual, to the short term deposits (less than 1 month) which are the types of deposits which involve most of the activity between the banks. This rise is the direct result of the Bank of Lebanon's entry into the private market the day before yesterday with its sale of approximately \$25 million, which led to the absorption of approximately 170 million Lebanese pounds of the banks' liquidity. Also, the rise resulted from the need of some banks for liquidity to cover the foreign currency positions which were taken recently.

The current level of interest on demand deposits is considered a record level.

12780

CSO: 4404/72

LEBANON

EXPORT OF MANUFACTURED GOODS FALLS

Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic 13 Sep 84 p 7

[Text] The value of Lebanese manufactured exports for the past month of August fell almost 12 percent from their July value. According to statistics from the technical affairs and industrial services agency of the Directorate General for Industry, the value of exports according to the certificates of origin was 80,667,000 Lebanese pounds.

Markets of Arab countries remained the primary recipients of manufactured exports, taking 96 percent of total exports. Chief among them was Saudi Arabia with 60.4 percent, followed by Iraq with 9.7 percent, Jordan with 7.3 percent, Kuwait with 6.4 percent, Egypt with 5.9 percent, and Syria with 2.3 percent. The value of exports to these countries was 74,365,000 Lebanese pounds, for 92.2 percent of total exports.

The most important types of exports were chemical manufactures, worth 8.3 million pounds; paper and paper products, worth 5.8 million pounds; mineral products, worth 5 million pounds; natural and mineral water, worth 4.6 million pounds; articles of clothing, worth 4.5 million pounds; food, worth 4.1 million pounds; and paints, worth 4.7 million pounds.

It should be mentioned that the value of Lebanese exports is not virtually accurate, because it is difficult to export all of the goods in the month indicated by their export documents, since transportation has become more difficult than before.

The distribution of the value of exports by importing country and type of product follows:

<u>Importing Country</u>	<u>Value</u> <u>(In Thousands of Pounds)</u>
Saudi Arabia	48,723
Iraq	7,889
Jordan	5,929
Kuwait	5,190
Egypt	4,798
<u>Syria</u>	<u>1,836</u>

Subtotal	74,365
Remaining Arab countries	3,143
West European countries	1,369
North American countries	1,776
<u>Australia</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	80,667

<u>Type of Product</u>	<u>Value</u> <u>(In Thousands of Pounds)</u>
Food	4,190
Soybean cake	-
Natural and mineral water	4,608
Beverages	387
Articles of clothing	4,512
Textiles	233
Carpets and blankets	-
Tanned and processed hides (excluding shoes)	793
Shoes	796
Mirrored and inlaid wood	-
Wood articles and furniture	1,635
Chemical manufactures	8,381
Paints	4,746
Medicinal preparations	2,221
Paper and paper products	5,889
Cardboard manufactures	2,050
Non-mineral mined materials	3,115
Asphalt	-
Mineral manufactures	5,055
Aluminum manufactures	2,770
Miscellaneous	434
Electrical appliances	1,401
Industrial machines	3,236
Plastic manufactures	2,616
<u>Various manufactures</u>	<u>21,599</u>
Total	80,667

12780
CSO: 4404/72

LEBANON

AUGUST CUSTOMS DUTIES REPORTED

Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic 9 Sep 84 p 7

[Text] With the exception of al-Masna', customs duties paid to the Lebanese treasury during this past August totaled 32,324,635 Lebanese pounds, a 30 percent increase from July receipts of 24.3 million Lebanese pounds.

It should be noted that the relative improvement in the security situation did not secure suitable negotiations for legal ports of entry and normal collection of customs duties, because the Lebanese coast is still beyond control, whether the ports operating there are legal or outside legal authority.

Imports received through the port of Beirut amounted to 18.3 million pounds, because of declining movement in the port and its limitations--as we have noted previously--on grain, fuel and vehicles.

Movement through the airport accounted for duties of 5.7 million pounds, and movement at Tripoli accounted for duties of 7 million pounds, in spite of smuggling activity within the port itself.

Customs duties in the port of Juniyah fell below 1 million pounds, although 4 million pounds had been collected in the earlier months of January and February, because small vessels put into nearby illegal ports, causing Juniyah to lose its vitality.

Customs duties collected during the eight months of January through August totaled 223.5 million pounds, 22.2 percent of the duties collected during the same period last year.

A detailed statement of August customs duties follows:

<u>Port</u>	<u>August</u>	<u>July</u>
Beirut		
Port	18,396,643.80	8,216,808.22
Airport	5,740,449.40	2,045,427.29
Tripoli	7,007,437.00	7,064,214.62
Juniyah	818,327.74	4,514,876.21

Al-Masna'	?	1,896,200.61
Sidon	<u>361,777.93</u>	<u>568,336.19</u>
Total	32,324,635.87	24,305,863.20

12780
CSO: 4404/72

BIG DROP IN CAR SALES REPORTED

Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic 3 Sep 84 p 7

[Article by Michel Murqus: "[Car Sales] Declined by 70 Percent, Amounting to 12,249 Cars in 6 Months; New Cars Represent 12 Percent Compared to 21.4 Percent Last Year"]

[Text] The drop in sales of cars and in cars registered in the first 6 months of this year amounted to 70 percent. Only 12,249 automobiles of all kinds were put on the road for the first time, according to the monthly statistics of the Car Registration Agency, compared to 41,205 automobiles put on the road for the first time in the first 6 months of last year.

The reasons for the decline in the car registration activity have become well known, namely:

1. The continued impact of the mountain war at the beginning of the year on the capital and the 6 February war which lasted 5 months during which Beirut Port was closed, thus making it impossible to import cars by sea. The cars entering by way of Juniyah Port were few. Beirut and its suburbs are the main center for the distribution of cars to the various parts of Lebanon, especially the south and al-Biq'a which, between them, got 45.1 percent of the total number of cars put on the road for the first time.
2. The events in the north between the end of last year and the beginning of this year. However, the periods of calm following those events enabled the north to make up for what it had lost. Last year, a total of 3,819 cars of all types were put on the road for the first time in the northern center. This year, a total of 4,532 cars were put on the road, with an increase of 18.6 percent over 1983.
3. The Sidon center: The Israeli land and sea blockade of the south curtailed the Sidon Port activity and forced importers to avoid dealing with this area because of their inability to insure and keep the cars. Moreover, the Car Registration Office in Sidon, located in the government house, was occupied. The number of cars registered this year amounted to 976 vehicles compared to 5,998 vehicles registered last year. The drop amounted to 83.7 percent.

4. Insofar as Zahlah center is concerned, most of the highways linking al-Biqa' with Beirut, the capital, were engulfed in dangers. Neither was the international highway open nor was the secondary road secure or safe in winter. This is why Zahlah registered 1,216 vehicles compared to 1,408 vehicles last year, with this center thus relatively maintaining its annual average.

Car Market

Thus, the car market registered between January and June [1984] 29.72 percent of the activity this market experienced in the corresponding period of last year.

The passenger cars put on the road for the first time amounted to 11,311 vehicles, dropping by 69.8 percent [compared to last year]. The sales of new cars imported by dealers dropped to 1,115 cars representing 9.85 percent of the total sales volume whereas the sales of new cars registered an increase of more than 20 percent (21.4 percent) last year. This drop puts the importing dealers in a critical position about which they have been complaining for a long period, in addition to their complaint about the competition of the collateral market.

The collateral market has witnessed this year the sale of 10,196 passenger cars including 284 public cars. The drop in the sales of used passenger cars amounted to 65.3 percent compared to last year and compared to a drop of 86.1 percent in cars imported by dealers.

Trucks: The number of trucks and pickups sold in the first half of this year amounted to 907, representing 24.38 percent of the number of trucks and pickups sold in the corresponding period of last year. The number of trucks sold by dealers amounted to 348, representing 38.3 percent of the total number of trucks sold, including 14 trucks registered as public trucks. The number of trucks sold in the collateral market amounted to 559 trucks, including 15 registered as public trucks.

A drop in the sales of new trucks amounted to 75.4 percent in comparison to last year.

A total of 31 buses were sold in the first half of this year, including 13 new buses and 18 used ones.

Countries of Origin

The vehicles sold in the first half of the year were distributed over 58 brand names from 9 countries of origin.

German vehicles continued to enjoy the highest popularity in the Lebanon market, with 6,464 German cars sold, representing 52.7 percent of the total, under the three brand names of Mercedes (4,745 or 38.7 percent of the total), BMW (998) and Volkswagen (571). But the German vehicles sold in the collateral market amounted to the biggest number totaling 6,094 or 94.2 percent of the total number of German cars sold. This is due to the preference for used German vehicles because of the high price of new ones.

French vehicles regained second place after the decline of the German [presumably meaning Japanese] vehicles because of the impossibility of importation and because of the French vehicles' reliance on the collateral market whereas the Japanese focus on the sale of new vehicles.

The number of French vehicles put on the road for the first time amounted to 2,380 vehicles, most of them of the Renault brand (1,727), followed by the Peugeot brand (610 vehicles). The collateral market continues to be the main market for these vehicles, with 2,234 vehicles out of a total of 2,353 vehicles, or 94.9 percent of the total, sold in the collateral market. The total of French vehicles sold amounted to 19.4 percent of the grand total.

Japanese vehicles took third place, with 1,877 vehicles or 15.3 percent of the total, sold. Toyotas took the first place among the Japanese cars sold (670), followed by Datsens (418). The sales of Japanese cars in the new and collateral vehicle market were almost equal, amounting to 52.5 percent and 47.5 percent successively.

The number of Italian vehicles sold amounted to 515 vehicles (488 of them Fiats), the Swedish cars sold amounted to 514 (503 of them Volvos), the U.S. vehicles sold amounted to 412, the British to 73, the Russian to 9 and the Romanian cars sold amounted to 3.

With the drop in the number of vehicles, the value of money changing hands dropped from 1.5 billion pounds to .5 billion Lebanese pounds. However, this drop reduces the pressure on the increase in the imports bill and in the oil bill at the rates experienced previously.

Vehicles

Insofar as other vehicles are concerned, a total of 397 motorcycles and 255 agricultural tractors were registered. All were sold in the collateral market.

8494

CSO: 4404/71

BANKING ACTIVITY IN 1983, FIRST QUARTER OF 1984 EXAMINED

Beirut AL-NAHAR in Arabic 27 Aug 84 p 7

[Article by Michel Murqus: "Unified Budget of Commercial Bank Drops by 3.95 Billion Pounds and Remittances to Outside World Reduce Deposits in Foreign Currency"]

[Text] The banking statistics issued recently by the Bank of Lebanon show that the 6 February 1984 war caused a loss of 3.95 billion Lebanese pounds in the banking apparatus' consolidated budget in the first quarter of this year--a loss representing 5 percent of the sum showing at the end of December 1983, amounting to 78,496,000,000 Lebanese pounds. This budget dropped to 74.3 billion last January, to 72.9 last February and then rose to 74.546 billion pounds last March.

This drop in the first quarter of the year is due to the transactions between the banks and non-resident individuals and establishments. In the assets column, the debt owed to the commercial banks by non-residents dropped by 29.4 percent or 895 million pounds. The debts owed by non-resident banks dropped by 17.9 percent or 2,696,000,000 pounds.

The cause of the drop, amounting to 3,591,000,000 pounds, is that non-resident individuals and establishments repaid a part of their debt and that the banks exercised extreme caution and curtailed the loaning activity because of violent security disturbances.

On the other hand, non-residents reduced their on-demand deposits by 6.5 percent or 217 million pounds. The obligations of the Lebanese banks to non-resident banks dropped by 6.1 percent or 338 million pounds.

The pressure of the [security] incidents also contributed to a decline in the private sector's deposits, though it was a limited decline not exceeding 0.7 percent. This decline was due to the withdrawal of deposits in anticipation of the developments or due to emigration. The drop in the private sector's deposits, amounting to 400 million Lebanese pounds, was not in deposits in Lebanese currency but deposits in foreign currencies.

In light of the type of deposits, the statistics show that deposits in Lebanese pounds rose by 3.7 percent or 1,511,000,000 pounds. This increase was contributed by resident depositors by increasing their deposits by

1,570,500,000 pounds (3.9 percent) whereas non-residents reduced their deposits by 65 million pounds.

But despite the sharp rise in the foreign currency prices, the resident depositors withdrew from their foreign-currency deposits the equivalent of 1,966,000,000 Lebanese pounds either to be converted into Lebanese pounds added to the deposits in this currency or to be remitted to the outside world. The total drop in foreign-currency deposits amounted to 2,118,000,000 pounds.

Thus, the total sum of deposits dropped for the third time since the third quarter of 1982 (a drop from 45.4 billion to 41.4 billion) and August 1983 (from 57.9 billion to 53.7 billion between July and August 1983) [as published]. The total deposits decline every time the security incidents threaten the country's future.

It is to be noted that the residents' deposits in Lebanese pounds had increased by 253 million pounds in January and dropped by 539 million pounds in February. Their deposits in foreign currencies increased by 1,149,000,000 pounds in January and dropped by 1,631,000,000 pounds in February, with the movement of the deposits tied directly to the events and to the withdrawal of the multi-national force from Lebanon.

Private Sector Loans

Despite the disturbances, the commercial banks pumped 2,379,000,000 pounds into the national economy, including 1.4 billion pounds in January. The sum dropped by 63 million pounds in February only to increase by 1.42 billion in March. In the absence of statistics categorizing the loans to the national economy, it can be said that most of the loans came from the modification of loans in foreign currencies, from the accumulated quarterly interest and from loans for foreign trade. The total value of the loans advanced by the commercial banks to the private sector amounted to 35,983,000,000 pounds. The loans advanced by the Bank of Lebanon to the private sector amounted to 320 million pounds, with a decline of 3 million pounds in comparison to the end of 1983.

Public Sector Debts

The banking debts owed by the public sector amounted to 21,084,000,000 pounds by the end of last March, including 14,845,000,000 pounds from the commercial banks (mostly in treasury notes, with a value of 14,221,000,000 pounds) and 6,239,000,000 pounds from the Bank of Lebanon. The increase coming from the commercial banks amounted to 133 million pounds whereas the public sector's debt to the Bank of Lebanon increased by 932 million pounds as a result of this sector's reliance on the Bank of Lebanon instead of the commercial banks due to the impossibility of their subscribing to the treasury notes.

At the end of the said period, the Bank of Lebanon budget achieved an increase of 6.6 percent or 19,704,000,000 pounds.

This increase in the assets section was achieved through increasing the Central Bank's loans to the commercial banks by 385 million pounds. In March, this increase amounted to 362 million pounds to enable some commercial banks to fulfill their commitments. The increase also resulted from the increased debt of the public sector, as we have already pointed out. In the debits section, the increase was achieved in the on-demand commercial banks' deposits which rose by 23.5 percent.

It must be noted that the Bank of Lebanon's foreign assets dropped by 6.7 percent or the equivalent of 840 million pounds, including 31 million in gold assets and 809 million in foreign currency assets.

The currency volume was also affected by the circumstances, decreasing by nearly 528 million pounds as a result of the drop in the foreign-currency deposits and the drop in the banks' net debts to the outside world.

As for the net foreign assets which bolster the balance of payments, they dropped, without any impact by the fluctuations in the currency prices, by 88 million pounds in the first quarter. This drop amounted to 3,217,000,000 pounds in 1983. However, the obvious increase, amounting to 3,085,000,000 pounds and resulting from the fluctuations in currency prices, turned into a drop of 1,594,000,000 pounds after calculation of the changes in the foreign assets, which brought about a drop of 1,506,000,000 pounds. Thus, we find that the balance of payments registered a deficit because of the security events.

1. Commercial Banks' Consolidated Budget by End of March 1984 (In Million Lebanese Pounds)

<u>Statement</u>	<u>December 1983</u>	<u>March 1984</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>
Assets:			
Available [mawfurat]	4,396	5,187	+17.9
Debts Owed by Private Sector	33,604	35,983	+ 7.0
Debts Owed by Public Sector	14,712	14,845	+ 0.9
Debts Owed by Non-Residents	3,045	2,150	-29.4
Debts Owed by Non-Resident Banks	14,988	12,292	+17.9
Fixed Assets	1,291	1,289	- 0.15
Uncategorized Assets	6,460	2,800	-56.6
Total	78,496	74,546	- 5.0
Debits			
Private Sector Deposits	54,641	54,251	- 0.7
Public Sector Deposits	734	760	+ 3.5
Deposits of Non-Residents	3,329	3,112	- 6.5
Obligations to Non-Resident Banks	5,475	5,137	- 6.1
Private Funds	2,978	3,124	+ 4.9
Uncategorized Debits	11,339	8,162	-28.0
Total	78,496	74,546	- 5.0

2. Types of Deposits with Commercial Banks
(Million Lebanese Pounds)

<u>Types of Deposits</u>	<u>December 1983</u>	<u>March 1984</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>
Deposits by Residents in Lebanese Pounds	40,241	41,816	+ 3.9
Deposits by Residents in Foreign Currency	14,400	12,424	-13.6
Deposits by Non-Residents in Lebanese Pounds	888	823	- 7.3
Deposits by Non-Residents in Foreign Currency	2,441	2,441	- 6.2
Total of Deposits in Lebanese Pounds	41,129	41,129	+ 3.7
Total of Deposits in Foreign Currency	16,841	16,841	-12.6
Total	57,970	57,363	-10.4

3. Budget of Bank of Lebanon
(In Million Lebanese Pounds)

<u>Statement</u>	<u>December 1983</u>	<u>March 1984</u>	<u>Percentage Change</u>
Assets:			
Foreign Assets	12,474	11,634	- 6.7
Loans to Private Sector	323	320	- 0.9
Loans to Commercial Banks	127	512	+303.0
Debts Owed by Public Sector	5,307	6,239	+ 17.5
Fixed Assets	41	41	-
Uncategorized Assets	213	958	+349
Total	18,485	19,704	+ 6.6
Debits:			
Money in Circulation Outside			
Bank of Lebanon	7,296	7,324	+ 0.4
On-Demand Deposits of Commercial Banks	4,168	5,149	+ 23.5
On-Demand Deposits of Business Banks	8	13	+ 62.5
Private Sector Deposits	13	13	-
Obligations to Public Sector	5,070	5,137	+ 1.3
Foreign Obligations	10	10	-
Private Funds	858	858	-
Uncategorized Debits	1,062	1,208	+ 13.7
Total	18,485	19,704	+ 6.6

4. Cash Situation
(Million Lebanese Pounds)

	<u>December 1983</u>	<u>March 1984</u>	<u>Change (%)</u>
Cash in Circulation	6,959	6,955	- 3
On-Demand Deposits	5,887	6,186	+ 299
Other Deposits (LL)	34,375	35,656	+1,281
Deposits in Foreign Currency	14,400	12,435	-1,961
Other additional obligations	8,215	8,076	- 139
Total	69,836	69,308	- 528
Net Foreign Debt	21,693	17,817	-3,876
Net Public Sector Debt	14,215	15,187	+ 972
Net Private Sector Debt	33,927	36,303	+2,376

5. Change in Foreign Assets by End of March 1984
(In Million Lebanese Pounds)

Change in Net Foreign Assets (Balance of Payments);

In Bank of Lebanon	+ 296
In Commercial Banks	-1,890
Total	-1,594
Changes Without Currency Price Fluctuations	- 88
Changes With Currency Price Fluctuations	-1,506

6. Debts Owed by Public Sector
(In Million Lebanese Pounds)

	<u>December 1983</u>	<u>March 1984</u>	<u>Increase</u>
Owed to Commercial Banks	14,712	14,845	133
Owed to Bank of Lebanon	5,307	6,239	932
Total	20,019	21,084	1,065

7. Debts Owed by Private Sector
(In Million Lebanese Pounds)

	<u>December 1983</u>	<u>March 1984</u>	<u>Increase</u>
Owed to Bank of Lebanon	323	320	- 3
Owed to Commercial Banks	33,604	35,983	+2,379
Total	33,927	36,303	2,376

8494

CSO: 4404/71

PALESTINIAN AFFAIRS

PLO FIGURE EXPLAINS PROBLEMS FACING PNC, PALESTINIAN REPRESENTATION

Tunis AL-SABAH in Arabic 23 Oct 84 p 8

[Interview with PLO Central Committee Member Khalid al-Hasan, by Muhammad Bu-Saninah and Salim al-Karay: "We Are Faced With a Plot By Palestinian Tools To Wipe Out Our Representative Capacity"]

[Text] The date for the Palestine National Council [PNC] meeting has been postponed so many times that several new factors and political developments have emerged on the Arab scene. In the course of these developments, the Palestinian cause has been subjected to its most serious challenges, for it is the major focus of attention on the scene. Everyone is looking forward to the convening of the PNC now that major differences have emerged on the Palestinian scene.

In order to examine all these issues and their dimensions, we contacted Khalid al-Hasan (Abu-al-Sa'id), member of Fatah's Central Committee and head of the PNC's foreign relations committee, in order to discuss the issue with him.

[Question] What is the background to the postponement of the PNC meeting all this time?

[Answer] Whenever any revolution or struggle starts up, it begins in the sphere of action. When it becomes strong enough, it enters a second stage, that of interaction. Interaction is not cooperation, because cooperation is with friends and interaction is with enemies.

When the interaction phase begins, i.e. when the society becomes involved in the issue (which is, with respect to the Palestinian cause, its pre-eminent internationalism), then international society begins to wonder what this revolution wants.

In this sequence of events, the revolution also passes through two stages of representation. The first stage is the legitimacy of the revolution, as represented by three points: the goal, the struggle, and the revolutionary people's rallying around this goal and this struggle, and therefore around the leadership of this struggle.

This stage of revolutionary legitimacy lasts throughout the sphere of action and up to the beginning of the interaction stage, at which time it becomes necessary for revolutionary legitimacy to progress to the next step, representative legitimacy--i.e. becoming the people's official spokesman who represents it and answers the question: What do we want? This feature is not peculiar to the Palestinian revolution and struggle; every revolution in the world has faced this same situation--Algeria against France, and Tunisia against France. The Vietnam revolution faced this situation, as did all the other revolutions. The PLO, under Fatah's leadership, started out in the revolutionary legitimacy stage and finally reached the stage of representative legitimacy after the 1974 Arab summit conference, when it was recognized by all the Arabs at the Rabat Summit as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. As a result, it became a full-fledged member of the Arab League and the non-aligned movement. Next came United Nations recognition of the PLO as the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. At this point, the revolution moved into the stage of popular representation, and the organization consequently became the pivotal representative. In such a state of affairs, the pivotal representative cannot be subject to any will other than that of the people to which it and the revolution belong. Should this representative be subservient to any party outside the will of the people, it would lose its right to represent them, and would consequently fall behind in achieving representative legitimacy, and the matter would therefore be considered a strategic loss for the entire revolution. British, American and Zionist plots have always started out by not recognizing any legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, because they don't want to recognize anything called a Palestinian people possessing full national rights. This is the practice of the Palestinian people's enemies, who recognize instead the Jewish Agency, which does not enjoy the popularity, representative nature, and Palestinian, Arab and international support that the PLO enjoys.

Our present problem is the plots aimed at wiping out the PLO's representative capacity. Since eliminating the PLO is impossible, they want to eliminate the PLO's representative capacity, so that this organization would become subject, not to the will of the Palestinian people, but to the will of any Arab regime, be it conservative, socialist or otherwise. The intent is to make it appear that the PLO does not have any decision making power; that such power derives from some Arab capital. This would make that particular Arab capital seem to be the center of representation, not the PLO. Consequently, the Palestinian people would lose the strategic victory they gained when the PLO became the sole legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. This is the secret behind the struggle. It is the secret behind the Tripoli struggle, the Beirut struggle, and is the secret behind the current objections made by some Arab states, or more properly two Arab states, to convening the PNC unless it submits to the conditions set by these two states. The tools which are emerging at this stage are Palestinian tools. To make the matter clearer, let me say that an organization like Sa'iqah, for example, cannot have any independent decision making power because it is part of a ruling Arab party and is therefore subject to this party's command. This is only logical and natural. Similarly, a person like Ahmad Jibril

cannot have any independent decision making power, because he is an officer in Syrian army intelligence. These parties, the so-called National Alliance, represent an effective tool for striking a blow to Palestinian legitimacy. For this reason, the question of convening the PNC is a question of perpetuating or killing the legitimacy of the PLO's representing Palestine.

The basic point here is that these parties do not realize that the Palestinian people, after all the defeats they have suffered in the past from unilateral Arab decision making, have become extremely sensitive about the issue of independence in an Arab context, even though they still believe in the nationalist context of the Palestinian cause. For this reason, the Palestinians reject the idea that the PLO should be subservient to or encompassed by any Arab regime or capital. They are convinced that he who struggles for freedom can never be anyone's slave, or else his struggle would lose its meaning. Similarly, whoever struggles for national independence cannot be subservient to anyone, because the mere fact of such subservience would eliminate the concept of independence. Representative legitimacy cannot be achieved without this independence.

This is the secret behind the issue. The independent organizations, which are said to have political or organizational differences with Fatah, have stopped dealing with it after the signing of the Algeria-Aden agreement. Therefore, they have no excuse for saying that there are political differences between them and Fatah, since they didn't even attend the last PNC meeting. Obviously, they stayed away because of Arab pressure on them, not because of any political differences with Fatah.

Unfortunately, the matter has swollen to such proportions that it would seem that there are very difficult problems in convening the PNC. Actually, there are no such problems, either from the standpoint of place, time or even legal quorums. However, we in Fatah, as the backbone of the PLO, promise to carry out our responsibilities. We are making every possible effort, and are being as patient as any man can be, to pave the way to freeing the independent organizations from the pressures being put on them, and to eliminating all the pretexts being made to explain their attendance or justify their non-attendance. Therefore, the PNC will meet soon, God willing, and the quorum will be filled. Whoever attends the PNC meeting will be declaring his belief in independent Palestinian decision making, and whoever does not attend will be directly or indirectly declaring his inability to free himself from subservience, or from pressure put on him by some Arab state.

[Question] What are the real motives behind some Arab regimes' denial of Palestinian representation, a stand which essentially brings them into agreement with the enemies of the Palestinian cause?

[Answer] So far, no Arab regime has contested the legitimacy of the PLO's representation of the Palestinian people, because if it were to do so, it would be faced with a frightening revolt and violent reaction from the Palestinian masses. However, the Arab regimes have shifted the issue from the PLO to a person--Yasir 'Arafat. They want to shift the debate to 'Arafat

in order to make the issue a personal one, not a political one. Herein lies the greatest danger, because if they don't want Yasir 'Arafat to become president of the PLO Executive Committee by means of a non-Palestinian decision, this would mean subjecting the Palestinian position to unilateral Arab decision making. To accept this would mean that the PLO command would have to be approved by Arab entities, which is unacceptable, because it would eliminate representative legitimacy, whether the accusations were directed at an organization or a person. At present, Yasir 'Arafat is up for re-election, beginning with Fatah's Central Committee, which decides which Fatah members will be nominated to the PNC and which PNC members will be nominated to the Executive Committee. Therefore, in order for Abu-'Ammar to be removed as member of the Executive Committee, the Fatah Central Committee would have to make a decision to that effect. When the Executive Committee meets to choose its president, that committee's members, including Fatah, will take part in selecting the president. If the Fatah Central Committee decides that Abu-'Ammar will not be president of the Central Committee, then he won't be. If it decides that he will be merely a committee member, then that is what he will be. This means that should the Fatah Central Committee be not independent, but subject to Arab decision making, its role as backbone of the PLO will be abolished. It will no longer be able to claim that it is a prophet for the Palestinian people in this struggle. Fatah will collapse, followed by independent Palestinian decision making. This is what the enemies of the revolution are demanding. The reason behind all of this is that Fatah follows a unique doctrine--that of struggling for the rights of the Palestinian people and their aspirations to return to their homeland and achieve complete liberation. The other organizations are struggling according to collectivist doctrines which vary according to the variables throughout the Arab world, regardless of Arab and Palestinian factions within these organizations.

Therefore, whenever the problem is transformed from an organizational to a personal one, pertaining to Yasir 'Arafat or anyone else, the result will be a blow to the PLO, because the Palestinian factor is the basic one in the Middle East equation, and nothing can be done about the Palestinian cause without Palestinian decision making, which might conflict with the stands of some Arab states. Therefore, for this or that state to be able to speak internationally in the name of the Palestinian people, the Palestinian leadership would have to be politically subservient to it. This is why some people say that decisions made in Tripoli, Damascus or any other Arab country would be the kiss of death for the Palestinian people's struggle.

[Question] Ever since the Syrian president's visit to Algeria, the Algerians appear to have backed off from hosting the PNC. What is Algeria's actual position?

[Answer] Algeria is free to host the PNC or not. We will not impose ourselves on anyone. If someone wants to host the PNC, we will thank him. If anyone has circumstances, opinions or factors which make him hesitate to do so, we will also thank him, because we have no problem about where to hold the council. Algeria has agreed, and we welcome this agreement. If it had not agreed to do so, we would not be angry, because our relations with

Algeria are too strong to be destroyed by something like this. We appreciate circumstances, and our policy has always been to interact with every Arab nation within that country's capacity. We have tried to improve and reinforce the potentials for interacting with the Palestinian revolution, but we will not ask of anyone more than he can give, and we will not be angry with anyone because he cannot offer more.

[Question] Some people have brought up the question of a Palestinian government in exile. What are the real motives behind this suggestion?

[Answer] So far, the Palestinian parties have not proposed a Palestinian government in exile. This proposal has come from non-Palestinian friends, who feel that forming a government in exile would lead to its official recognition by the world. In principle, the idea is not objectionable, but the place to discuss it and decide on it is the PNC, and this subject has not yet been added to the agenda as a topic of discussion.

[Question] What progress has been made on convening the international congress?

[Answer] Everyone who believes in the international congress has declared their approval, but we must realize that this congress must be international in nature, and therefore must be approved by those international parties which have some influence on international policy at present. The most important such countries are the permanent members of the Security Council, including the United States. Therefore, an effort must be made to get all these states to agree to the international congress.

China and the Soviet Union have agreed to this congress, as have some European countries in one form or another--in principle, but not under the present circumstances. The main obstacle is America's Middle East policy.

[Question] There have been many attempts to steer the PLO towards political action alone, but Abu-'Ammar has stated that this is the year for gathering political papers, while next year will be the year of harvest. What do you think about this?

[Answer] For any colonized people to abandon their armed struggle would be to abandon their cause. The second point is that the nature of our incompatibility with the Zionist entity is one of its very presence. Once the incompatibility reaches this stage, the use of force in the struggle cannot be avoided.

The Zionist enemy has its plots, such as "Greater Israel," which it is trying to impose through war and expansion. Therefore, this philosophy and practice can only be opposed by meeting it in kind and degree. For this reason, we absolutely cannot give up the armed struggle, unless we want our cause to die.

[Question] There has been much talk recently about Egypt's return to the Arab ranks. What effect will this have on the Arab scene in general and the Palestinian scene in particular?

[Answer] After Sadat's death, President Husni Mubarak came to power as a person who had not been responsible for the Camp David agreements. As president, he began to gradually adopt a practical course of action at variance with and opposed to the Zionist-American Camp David agreements. In so doing, President Mubarak is in tune with the Egyptian people, who reject subjugation. We realize that at present Egypt cannot wipe out the Camp David policy just by decree, and that withdrawing from this policy is a practical political course of action for a country with Egypt's economic and political circumstances. Therefore, we believe that everyone must get closer to Egypt as it distances itself from Camp David.

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CSO: 4404/69

SOCIAL INSURANCE PROGRAMS, FIGURES VIEWED

London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 22 Sep 84 p 4

[Text] The amount spent by the General Organization for Social Insurance (GOSI) in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia during 1404 AH (1984) for retirement and workmen's compensation totaled 81,150,198 riyals. This came in the context of the organization's efforts to ensure a secure future that provides the worker and his family a dignified and stable life in circumstances where the worker has lost his ability to work due to old age, occupational incapacitation, death, or occupational accidents or illnesses.

Social insurance hazard benefits during the same year totaled 23,458,909 riyals, which was paid as old age benefits for elderly workers who were unable to accrue the required amount of time to receive retirement benefits. In these cases they were granted a free month's benefits for each month they lacked of the required time. This figure also included compensation for occupational hazards and accidents an employee may have been exposed to in the performance of his job.

The amount paid in social insurance retirement benefits during 1404 AH totaled 55,552,249 riyals. This included old age pensions, non-occupational incapacitation, survivorship payments, and marriage grants.

Social insurance benefits, compensation, and treatment are offered without sexual, ethnic or age discrimination. This is based on the precepts of the munificent Islamic Shari'ah, to which the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia adheres, which is viewed as the model of humane treatment of workers who participate in the country's awakening, and which is a strong incentive for productivity at maximum capacity.

The number of workers on the social insurance rolls totaled 1,277,957, a 341,759 increase over the 1403 AH figure.

The private sector workers are concentrated in the Eastern Province due to the large number of private installations there, whereas the public sector workers are concentrated in Riyadh due to the presence there of the government bureaucracy. There are 279,1403 (as published) employees of sole proprietorships, 224,199 employees of corporations, 349,582 employees of limited companies, 137,760 employees of joint partnership companies, and

18,320 employees of limited partnerships. The number of employees under social insurance in government organizations totals 172,421. In other organizations, there are 116,532 employees.

Workers between the ages of 24 and 34 represent 47 percent of the total workforce. In other words, half of the workforce is in the middle age group, and members of this group make the best workers, especially for physical work. This huge increase in the number of workers in the various sectors comes as a result of the great progress experienced by the kingdom in various fields.

Increase in Number of Saudi Organizations

There are 11,922 economic organizations under the social insurance system, an increase of 19 percent over 1403 AH. Saudi organizations play an important role in the economic activity of the kingdom since they represent 78 percent of the total number of organizations operating there.

The activities of Saudi organizations are most notable in the commerce and hotel sectors, then the building and construction sector, and finally in services related to economic activity in the kingdom in general.

Partnerships represent 12.7 percent of all firms. Their activities are concentrated in the building and construction sector, then in the finance and insurance sector.

Foreign firms represent 9.7 percent of all organizations, and their activities are concentrated in the building and construction sector, then in semi-finished manufacturing industries.

The social insurance office in Dammam has on record the largest number of Saudi and foreign organizations, including 2,050 Saudi organizations and 294 foreign concerns. Meanwhile, the Riyadh office has registered the largest number of joint firms, totaling 426.

GOSI invests a portion of its capital in the interests of workers and their families on the one hand, and to participate in national economic growth on the other.

Through 1403 AH, the capital invested totaled 566,612,778 riyals. These investments have been in the fields of electricity, gas, cement, construction materials, manufacturing, real estate, hotels, banks, agricultural production and foodstuffs.

The organization has also set up private investment projects represented by a number of commercial, office and residential buildings.

In the field of health services, the organization has built the National Hospital in Riyadh, which received 167 referrals during 1403 AH.

The organization also is trying to build large hospitals in the various Saudi provinces. One of them will be in the city of Riyadh and will have 250 beds.

The organization had 1,253 employees at the end of 1403 AH working in various departments.

12608

CSO: 4404/32

ROAD CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS DISCUSSED

Riyadh AL-JAZIRAH in Arabic 30 Sep 84 p 11

[Text] The Ministry of Communications is considered among the oldest of ministries in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, since the means of communication and transportation--land, sea, air, wireless communications and railroads--were one of the first areas of concern to the kingdom's founder, His Highness the late King 'Abd-al-'Aziz.

This sector has witnessed numerous advances commensurate with the advances resulting from the kingdom's awakening and its leap into civilization.

The number of roads has increased year after year in tandem with the increase in the country's financial resources and the needs of the various provinces for educational, health and social assistance, and the services which the state provides to the nation and the citizenry. The Ministry of Communication's long experience in the fields of its expertise has enhanced its performance and raised the level of its accomplishments so that these accomplishments now include all the areas and provinces of the kingdom within its programs and time schedules specified by the 5-year development plan, which the government has devoted to all amenities of life in the country.

In light of the vastness of the projects undertaken by the Ministry of Communications, which are in line with the rapid steps toward progress that the country is taking, the ministry has cooperated with a number of specialized multinational firms in addition to the undertakings of its own design and implementation departments which use the ministry's own tools and facilities.

The Ministry of Communications has worked to encourage and stimulate the national road industry in cooperation with about 50 specialized Saudi firms. It has undertaken road and overpass construction simultaneously in all the kingdom's provinces as part of the program of priorities categorized in the 5-year development plans implemented by the government.

Road Programs

The Ministry of Communication's road programs are aimed at meeting the huge increase in transportation among the various parts and provinces of the

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the increase in the horizontal and vertical expansion of basic services which the government is providing in the areas of health, education, social services, agriculture, industry and others. The ministry's programs also seek to link all the cities and villages with primary roads. The road program has consisted of three principal phases:

- 1) Completion of a network of roads linking the primary areas in the largest number possible of cities and villages in view of the traffic patterns.
- 2) Expansion and construction of roads which, due to congested traffic, must be divided or converted to highways.
- 3) Development of services, maintenance and safety features on the roads.

Highways

As part of the road construction plans being executed by the Ministry of Communications, highway projects were begun a few years ago in areas that have very high density traffic.

A highway is a road with multiple lanes going in opposite directions separated by a median strip whose width ranges from 10 to 20 meters. It also has overpasses to facilitate traffic movement at road intersections.

The highways are provided with all the safety features such as metal guard-rails stretching along both sides and the median strip. Stripes, lines and the necessary signs are painted, and there are parking areas along both sides.

The planned speed limit for highways is 120 km per hour. The first highway was constructed in 1396 AH (1976 AD) as part of a deliberate program aimed at spreading the construction of this type of road to various provinces and converting some public roads to highways to accommodate the continuing growth of traffic movement among the cities and provinces. The length of completed highways in 1401 AH (1981 AD) totaled about 1,000 km.

The highway construction program includes the construction of modern rest areas spaced at specific distances along the road. These consist of parking areas, small hotels (motels), restaurants, auto repair shops and workshops for highway service employees that are open around the clock.

Development Plans

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's 5-year development plan has devoted a significant share of attention and interest to the projects of the Ministry of Communications in view of its achievements in terms of facilitating the transport of development and service projects to the various parts of the country. During the first 5-year development plan from 1390-1395 AH (1970-1975 AD), most of the provinces and cities were linked with paved roads so that by the end of the plan the length of paved road totaled 12,169 km and the length of dirt roads totaled 8,077 km.

By the end of the second development plan (1395-1400 AH, 1975-1980 AD), primary road and dirt road projects were completed bringing the length of paved roads to 21,583 km and that of dirt roads to 23,186 km.

As for the third 5-year plan (1400-1405 AH, 1980-1985 AD), it called for increasing the total length of roads (excluding dirt roads) by 6,000 km and introducing various improvements to existing projects, including the expansion of some roads, the construction of bridges, overpasses, mountain passes and the conversion of other roads to highways to accommodate the increase in traffic.

Primary Roads

The phrase "primary roads" refers to those roads that the Ministry of Communications has constructed in cooperation with national and foreign expertise as part of a phase program aimed at improving the construction of roads and accessories commensurate with the rapid Saudi progress that has encompassed all amenities of life in the country. All of the regions of the country are linked through an integrated network that connects the regions of a single province together and the provinces to each other, in addition to the international roads that connect the kingdom to neighboring fraternal countries. The length of roads completed at the beginning of 1401 AH (1981 AD) totaled about 23,000 km. This included various kinds of roads and the necessary safety features.

Bridges/Overpasses

Given the great progress in road construction achieved by the Ministry of Communications, the construction of bridges has become one of its most important activities.

The bridge department in the design office has developed technical specifications taking into consideration the actual usage of bridges and overpasses that have been constructed. The load bearing value of bridges and overpasses under design has been increased to 60 tons and this, then, is a factor in projects that are under study or being implemented. This increases the capability of the bridge to accommodate all loads.

Dirt Roads

In 1384 AH (1974 AD) the Ministry of Communications began to form crews to make dirt roads with the intention of facilitating transportation between villages on the one hand and between areas of the countryside and the nearest primary road network on the other.

More than 40 dirt road teams equipped with machinery, equipment and the technical and implementational tools were created. They have worked in the various parts of the kingdom until the total length of completed dirt roads has now reached 25,000 km, serving 7,004 villages.

Specifications

With the diversity of ground formations and the nature of the land and the climate in the various expansive regions of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Ministry of Communications, improving on international specifications to accommodate the natural, geographical and climatic conditions in the kingdom, has drawn up booklets containing all the technical specifications that must be met in road projects. These booklets include all the desired design and implementation details as a supplement to the general specifications book, which is considered the basis to be relied upon in the implementation of all projects.

Maintenance

All of the roads, bridges and accessories built by the Ministry of Communications are subject to constant maintenance of two kinds. The first is the regular maintenance to clean road surfaces, repair defects resulting from use, paint and upgrade signs. The second is preventive maintenance to keep the roads and bridges continually in top condition. This requires reconstruction of parts of the road if the situation warrants it, or the addition of a new layer of asphalt.

Tihamah Obstacles

The Tihamah mountain range extends 500 km along the 'Asir region (the southern area of Saudi Arabia) at heights that exceed 3,000 meters. The region is distinguished by the highest average rainfall and the lowest average temperatures. This makes agriculture flourish in its fertile plains.

The Ministry of Communications has conducted extensive studies with the intention of discovering the best system of roads to connect the different parts of the region. These studies have revealed the possibility of achieving the desired goal by using modern construction methods to overcome the different stretches, which extend a total of 858 km, with bridges and tunnels through 13 "obstacles."

Implementation of this huge project was begun in 1397 AH (1977). Work is proceeding on schedule utilizing extremely advanced engineering methods that make this accomplishment unique in terms of the advanced technology used for road, bridge, tunnel and crossings construction in extremely rugged regions. The three pictures show some scenes of the work on this important project.

Transportation Projects in Riyadh

The Ministry of Communications has made a great effort to construct ring roads around the city of Riyadh, improve the entrances to the capital, and work to complete highways to link the eastern part of Riyadh to the western part and the northern part to the southern part.

We obtained from Deputy Minister of Communications Dr Nasir al-Salum a detailed report of the ministry's projects in Riyadh. Following is an explanation of that report:

The city of Riyadh, the largest city in the kingdom, began to suffer some years ago from traffic congestion in the center of the city and at the entrance to the city because of the rapid development experienced recently. This has led officials to consider planning and improving the principal roads and axes and the roads that link the city of Riyadh to the remaining parts of the kingdom in order to facilitate movement between the areas of the city and avoid too many intersections in the center of the city.

The Ministry of Communications has prepared studies and undertaken scientific and field research to solve the crisis, which has worsened with the passage of time. These studies have provided a number of appropriate solutions, two of which are being pursued: construction of highway ring roads around the city of Riyadh and improvement of entrances into the city from all directions.

The ministry has moved quickly to construct the Riyadh ring road to provide ease and freedom of movement between the various regions of the city without obstacles or traffic lights. The ministry has also studied improving and expanding the roads that are entrances into the city of Riyadh and linking them with the ring road. Agreement from the High Commissioner has been obtained for completion of most of the work on these roads so that they can begin to serve the citizen as soon as possible.

Following is a glimpse of the projects that the Ministry of Communications is undertaking in and around the city of Riyadh:

Riyadh Ring Road

Care was taken in planning the route for the ring road to ensure that it would pass through the suburbs of the city of Riyadh and serve the largest possible number of residents in the suburbs. The planning sought to achieve the following services as well:

--Ensure the rapid movement of traffic between the parts of the city and its downtown areas without having to drive through the center of the city. This would help to lessen the noise and pollution.

--Facilitate movement in the shortest possible time and without obstruction for emergency public services such as firefighting equipment and ambulances.

--Link the entrances to the city and the roads leading to the rest of the cities in the kingdom to each other. This will facilitate the land transport of goods and pilgrims through the city of Riyadh.

--Link the King Khalid International Airport to the various residential areas of the city.

The necessary designs for this road have been completed in accordance with the highest and most modern engineering standards. It will be a highway that provides free movement without obstacles or traffic lights. It has been supplied with multi-level entrances and exits that ensure access to

areas along its route and major axes leading to the center of the city. A statistical description of the road is as follows:

--The length of the completed ring road will be 83 km.

--The width of the road will be 100 meters including service roads.

--It is designed for a speed limit of 120 km per hour.

--The road will have four lanes in each direction and a median island. In addition, there will be parking areas and a two-lane service road for each direction.

--The road will have 25 small intersections and 8 major ones.

--There will be electric lighting for the entire road and at all exits.

--There will be landscaping and decorating along the entire road and at all exits.

Parts of the Ring Road

The northern leg will be 17 km long and will include three large intersections and four small ones. It will have access to the entrances to the King Khalid International Airport, the al-Qasim highway, the Salbukh road and the Riyadh-Dammam highway. This part is currently being constructed.

The eastern leg will be 26 km long and will include two major intersections and seven minor ones. It will have access to the Kharis highway and the al-Kharj highway. It is currently under construction.

The southern leg will be 16 km long and will include two major intersections and three minor ones. It will be linked to the al-Kharj road, the al-Ha'ir road and the Dayrab road. It is currently under construction.

The western leg will be 35 km long and will include one major intersection and nine minor ones. It will be linked to the Riyadh-Jiddah highway. God willing, construction on the first part of this leg will begin this year.

Major Ring Road Intersections

The ring road around the city of Riyadh will include eight major intersections, all of which will provide unimpeded movement in all directions. They are located where the ring road crosses the major roads leading into the city of Riyadh. They are as follows:

- 1) The north leg intersection with the Salbukh road, the new al-Dir'iyah road and the west leg. This intersection is located north of King Sa'ud University.

- 2) The north leg intersection with the Riyadh--al-Qasim highway. This is located north of al-'Ulya.
- 3) The north leg intersection with the connector to the new King Khalid International Airport, the Riyadh-Dammam highway and the east leg. This intersection is located south of the southwest corner of the airport.
- 4) The east leg intersection with the Kharis highway, located in the al-Rawdhah district.
- 5) The west leg intersection with the al-Kharj road connector and the south leg. This is located northeast of the cement factory.
- 6) The south leg intersection with the al-Kharj road, located north of the al-'Aziziyah district.
- 7) The south leg intersection with the Riyadh--al-Qasim highway (formerly West al-Bakhirah Street), al-Hijaz road, Dayrab road and the west leg. This will be the largest intersection in the kingdom and will be located along the Wadi Hanifah in the al-Shafa district.
- 8) The west leg intersection with the Riyadh-Jiddah highway. This is located in the western part of Zahrat Laban and north of the low-income area.

Expansion, Improvement of Entrances to Riyadh

On directives of the government of his majesty the king, the Ministry of Communications has embarked on a program of improving the main roads between the cities of the kingdom and upgrading them to divided highways with multiple lanes. Regarding the city of Riyadh, the projects are:

- 1) Riyadh-Dammam highway. This is the main road between the two cities of Dammam and Riyadh. It will be 100 meters wide and include three lanes in each direction and a median divider. It will be linked to the ring road with an intersection at the northeast corner of the ring road, south of the new King Khalid International Airport. This road is currently under construction.
- 2) Expansion of the Kharis road. This project is aimed at upgrading the Kharis road from al-Thamamah road to the al-Rawdhah district and linking it with the ring road so that it will become a highway allowing unimpeded movement. It will range between 84 and 100 meters wide and will have three lanes in each direction. It will have service roads on the sides and will be completely lighted. The road is currently under construction and will tie into the ring road at the al-Rawdhah intersection.
- 3) The al-Kharj highway connector. This road connects the ring road with the al-Kharj highway. It passes north of the new industrial district and through existing housing projects. It is meant to relieve the pressure on the current al-Kharj road and will be a divided highway with three lanes in each direction and service roads along the sides.

- 4) The Riyadh--al-Kharj road. This road ties into the Riyadh ring road north of al-'Aziziyah. Its expansion has been completed and it has been upgraded to a divided highway with four lanes in each direction.
- 5) The Riyadh--al-Ha'ir road. This road ties into the ring road in the south of Riyadh and is considered an extension of King 'Abd-al-'Aziz road (al-Batha' Street) which leads to the center of the city.
- 6) The Riyadh-Dayrab road. This project is aimed at expanding the old Dayrab road so that it can accommodate local and transit traffic. It includes three lanes in each direction and service roads along the sides, and was completed recently.
- 7) The Riyadh--al-Mazahimiyah--Mecca highway. Most of the sections of this road have been completed to provide a link between the city of Riyadh and the Western Province in general. This is a divided highway with three lanes.
- 8) The Riyadh-Salbukh road. This road has been upgraded to a divided highway with a number of intersections north of the city of Riyadh and was completed recently.
- 9) The Riyadh--al-Qasim highway. This project will link al-Qasim Province with Riyadh. The road will tie into the ring road north of al-'Ulya and will continue into the city of Riyadh as a highway. It will be 84 meters wide until it meets the south leg of the ring road, and then it will form a major axis into the city going from north to south. A number of sections are currently under construction.

The Ministry of Communications is also preparing the necessary studies to develop two main axes for the city of Riyadh. One of them will run north and south and the other will run east and west. These two axes are the Riyadh--al-Qasim highway (formerly West al-Bakhirah Street) and al-Islam road. Following is a brief description of these two projects:

- 1) The Riyadh--al-Qasim highway. This road cuts through the center of the city of Riyadh from the farthest southern part of the city to the farthest northern part. It is 84 meters wide and will essentially be the backbone of the city since it will also connect in the north to the western entrance of the King Khalid International Airport. Work on the project has begun in a number of stages. It will be a divided highway providing unimpeded movement, will have a number of lanes, service roads, and many exits in the center of the city and in the suburbs. This road will begin along the south leg of the ring road and will continue to the north leg and then will go north to al-Qasim Province.
- 2) Al-Islam road. This project represents Riyadh's primary east-west axis, and is considered an extension of the Kharis highway. It will pass through the National Guard tunnel and along Arab Gulf Street and will continue west to the diplomatic quarter. Then it will connect with the Riyadh-Mecca highway. This highway will consist of three lanes in each direction, will

have service roads along the sides, and will have exits at all the major streets inside the city of Riyadh. This road will include an overpass 2,100 meters long on Arab Gulf Street. The project is currently being implemented in a number of phases.

In addition, the Ministry of Communications is studying, designing, implementing and constructing numerous other road and field projects both inside the city of Riyadh and in its suburbs. The purpose of these projects is to serve the public and ensure the safety and speed of the flow of traffic and solve traffic congestion crises. The ministry will also devote its efforts to designing numerous other similar projects for periods in the near future, God willing.

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SYRIA

BRIEFS

AL-ASAD VISIT TO MOSCOW--Lebanese diplomatic sources told AL-TADAMIN that Syrian President Hafiz al-Asad's surprise trip to Moscow had five goals:

1. Learning the results of the discussions between Soviet Foreign Minister Andrey Gromyko and American president Reagan, particularly those that dealt with the Middle East crisis and whether they indicated a change in the Syrian role.
2. The Jordanian initiative to resume relations with Egypt. The Soviet position has been unclear in opposing this initiative and the good quality of Soviet-Jordanian relations has not been affected. This is incompatible with the strategic agreement concluded between Damascus and Moscow.
3. The unclear Soviet position vis-a-vis PLO leader Yasir 'Arafat. Is Moscow in favor of deposing Arafat from the Palestinian leadership or not?
4. To inform the Soviet leadership of the situation in Syria, particularly in light of everything that has been circulating following Talas' recent statements about Rif'at al-Asad.
5. The joint framework with Moscow following the American elections.

On the same topic, a responsible Syrian source told AL-TADAMUN that President Hafiz Al-Asad's visit to the Soviet Union sought to obtain from the Soviet leadership political, military and economic support which would enable Syria to disrupt the new and incipient Jordanian initiative to resume diplomatic relations with Egypt. /Text/ /London AL-TADAMUN in Arabic No 80, 20 Oct 84 p 6/ 12551

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YEMEN ARAB REPUBLIC

BRIEFS

FRIENDSHIP, COOPERATION TREATY--The Yemen Arab Republic has informed a number of Guld states that the signing of a friendship and cooperation pact with the Soviet Union "will not change Yemen's foreign policy and will not affect its excellent and strong ties with the Gulf states." Yemeni authorities believe that the treaty was signed during President 'Ali 'Abdallah Salih's visit to the Soviet Union last week to develop bilateral relations between Moscow and Sanaa in various fields. /Text/ /Paris AL-MUSTAQBAL in Arabic No 400, 20 Oct 84 p 14/ 12551

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OPPOSITION PAPER COMMENTS ON POSSIBLE FUTURE REGIMES

GF281358 London KEYHAN in Persian 15 Nov 84 p 7

[Dariush Farhandi analysis; London KEYHAN weekly in Persian; founder and publisher Dr Mesbahzadeh]

[Text] Khomeyni may not be in the last weeks of his life, but he is certainly going through his last months. His enemies are still increasing and the ayatollah does not show the slightest inclination to offer them the flag of truce. All dictators die alone. Will the Islamic Republic fall apart if Khomeyni dies?

One can find very few serious and opinionated people who would hesitate on this. However, since nothing is definite, one cannot make a decisive judgment on the collapse of the Islamic Regime following Khomeyni's death, even though there are certain indications to this end. This, however, does not stop the leaders of the Islamic Republic from making efforts to capture the ayatollah's inheritance. What they will do with it is another matter. It is certain that the armed forces and the guards corps will play a major role in the struggle to capture the inheritance of the revolution. If the army captures it, it is highly likely that it will put an end to it, while the guards will try to continue its main philosophy should they win the struggle.

Had the Iranian Army been disbanded, as they had planned to at the start and immediately after the victory of the revolution, then it would have been far simpler to draw a picture of future Iranian politics. Ahmad Madani wanted to reduce the size of the Iranian Army by reducing the length of national service from 2 years to 1 year. He did not want to dissolve it. It was Mostafa Chamran who seriously pursued the dissolution of the army. It was he, as the defense minister, who retired 8,000 officers and NCOS at one time while at the same time establishing paramilitary forces based on those of the Amal group in Lebanon. Mehdi Bazargan, in turn, although he never openly stated so, was not opposed to the dissolution of the army. In his book "The Worksheet of the Interim Government From Birth to Death," he states that they [not further identified] started the Kordestan issue at the time of the service of the interim government and intended to charge the army with crushing the uprising in Kordestan in order to maintain its integrity and tried to solve the problem of Kordestan politically. Chamran's trip to Kordestan at the time shows that the government and revolution did not dare move their watchful eyes from the army.

Bazargan adds that what the Kordestan issue did not achieve was achieved by the war. In any case, one cannot drop the army factor in any estimation on the future developments in Iran.

The war with Iraq not only helped the Islamic regime divert attention from internal problems to external ones, but truly stopped the implementation of two major projects being orchestrated by the Islamic regime's officials with the aid of all the leftist groups. These plans were the dissolution of the army and the severance of ties with the Western arms suppliers and an attachment to the Soviet Union for arms. The war not only took the opportunity from the regime to dissolve the army, but it forced it to try to reconstruct the traditional armed forces, which still bears the signs of the damage it suffered from the Islamic revolution. The Soviet arms supply also was unable to replace its Western counterpart in the Iranian Armed Forces. The Iranian Army, which was being destroyed in the abattoirs of the Islamic Revolution, managed to reconstruct itself in the war fronts, so now it can play an important role in the political future of Iran. On the power of the army it is sufficient to say that Khomeyni has repeatedly warned it against involvement in political wranglings. However, it is not possible to exactly describe the political leanings of the army, if there are any. One thing is certain: The Iranian Armed Forces are far more influenced by nationalist ideas than religious indoctrination and no one knows this better than the heads of the politico-ideological departments of the armed forces.

Memories of the time of the shah which have surfaced among all classes of Iranian society are also evident, if not more so, in the armed forces. The political forces trying to return democracy to Iran should not ignore this and pass it by. Otherwise, they themselves will be ignored and left aside. Over 4 years of joint experiences in the war fronts with Iraq not only has not created any closeness and sympathy between the army and the guards corps, but in fact it has magnified their differences and disagreements. Not only does the army look at the battle capability of the guards with doubt, but it is also very annoyed over the advantages that the Islamic regime grants to the guards corps as the fruits of the revolution. Such as annoyance can be seen, for example, in the confidential letter to the Defense Ministry by Colonel 'ali Sayyad-Shirazi, the commander of the ground forces. In his letter he compares the shortages of the armed forces with the benefits enjoyed by the guards. Should annoyance in the armed forces turn to objections, this being the armed forces, it will turn into armed objections. Khomeyni is more scared of this than of anything else.

If there had been any plans for an uprising on 5 August 1983 [the anniversary of the constitution and the day people came out in the street to show opposition to the regime], and if such an uprising was supported with arms, then the regime would have been in very serious danger. Nobody believed that on the invitation of a few radios [clandestine opposition radios, Radio Iran and Free Voice of Iran] millions of Iranians would come out in the streets. The danger for the regime becomes especially more serious when the unity of the leaders break down. As long as the regime is united and acts in coordination it can easily digest the political activities of the armed forces. However, dissension and division in the leadership will further enable the armed forces to enter the scene as the final arbiters. This is the present condition in the Islamic Republic.

There is even talk that a rift in the Islamic Republican Party has reached such a level that the division of the party into two is inevitable. In an interview with the president of the regime, Seyyed 'ali Khamenei, JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI asked: "In the two economic movements within the party, some individuals say they support you and your ideas, while others say they support our brother Mr Hashemi-Rafsanjani, thus pretending that there are differences of opinion between the two of your."

Khamene'i replied: "I see this as a move by the counterrevolutionary radios. This is one of the policies of the counterrevolution in this country."

However, Ayatollah 'ali Akbar Meshkini, Qom's Friday Imam, does not build as high a wall of denial as the president. Addressing the Qom seminary students he said: "We should strongly avoid issues which may make people think that there are two different policies in the society. There have always been differences of opinion and taste, of course...the respected religious students who are learning religious issues must avoid involvement with politics and parties...". For a regime born out of a revolution which has gained its legitimacy not from the law but from a great movement of the masses, distancing people from politics and reducing the size of the group that makes political decisions is a very meaningful development. This shows that the regime no longer trusts its social foundations and is afraid that a division among the leaders may become a division among the supporters.

The rift in the Islamic republican leadership is deepening while Khomeyni is still alive. When he has left the scene, his successors will have the most difficult time. It is through this rift that the opposition forces outside the regime must enter the arena. What are these replacement forces? As far as we can see into future developments, no more than three groups are preparing to assume power. These are:

- Forces with various makeups that can come from within the regime.
- Leftist forces, the major portion of which is formed by Mojahedin-e Khalq.
- Supporters of a constitutional monarchy.

Among them, the monarchists have the most chance for two reasons: The first is because, unwittingly or otherwise, people compare the present regime in Iran with the former one. The comparison is to the benefit of the former regime. Secondly, a monarchy as an institution and focal point is in the best position to realise the national goal, especially because the young claimant to the throne is free from all those facets that formed the weak points of the former regime. The revolution has equally disgraced the Islamic regime and the leftist forces. It was in the Islamic regime that people opened their eyes in search of democracy and saw a religious dictatorship facing them.

In an interview, Giscard d'Estaing once said "no regime has helped us more than the socialists in realizing that socialism cannot govern a developed society." With respect to the Islamic regime in Iran, this means that nothing has shown us more than the religious regime that religion cannot rule a

developing country and that "religion" and "politics" have two different meanings and that leadership by religious figures is not only not possible in a modern country but that it brings the most harm to the religion itself. We may have no witness more valuable than Bazargan in this respect, who writes a worrying description of how people are turning against religion in his latest book, "Two Movements of the Islamic Revolution." Another view looks at the leftist forces--with or without religious coloring. Their terrorism shook the foundations of the regime of the shah and played an obvious role in its fall, but did not succeed in opening a niche for them in the Islamic regime.

Therefore, should monarchy sit down and wait for the competition to fall in an arena that looks empty of competitors so that it can capture the field? If the answer to this question is positive then we can say that time is on the side of the monarchy, but we must not forget that power, like nature, escapes, but we must not forget that power, like nature, escapes the vacuum. History, including the history of our own country, is not immune to surprising turns. The chances of surprising events increase especially when the destiny of a country becomes very uncertain. The least we can say is that the possibilities of unknown events are at least equal to those that can be forecast. Even though we cannot forecast such events, we can guess. If a man of determination who is familiar with danger captures the masterless power it would be surprising if he spreads the golden carpet for the return of the monarchy. In a country where people like Bani-Sadr, Raja'i, and Khamene'i have become presidents, it would be surprising if dozens are not dreaming of just such a thing. When enticing power becomes available the number of its lovers multiplies many fold. Political power will not marry anyone Italian style. In some countries it changes hand by popular vote, while in others it changes by coups and revolutions.

Experience shows that it is better for society if power changes hands through popular vote. It is also far less damaging. This can best be guaranteed in revolution-stricken Iran by a constitutional monarch. Governments come and go while the king stays. This is the most valuable lesson that we must learn from the Islamic revolution.

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END